00023127

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF MY LIFE

AND

MEMOIRS OF MY MOTHER

BY

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

AUTHOR OF

'HISTORY OF THE GIRONDISTS' ETC.

TRANSLATED BY LADY HERBERT

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

23127
a 2

LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty

1872

928.41
Lam/Lam/Tre
23127

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THIS BOOK is the work of two minds and of two hearts. The ruin and pecuniary difficulties which overwhelmed the declining years of M. de Lamartine, constrained him to sell the manuscript which he had compiled from family archives, and enlarged with his own notes, as a tribute of filial piety to a dear and holy memory. Its publication was announced even during his lifetime; but deferred at his earnest entreaty. Repurchased by the editors of his other works, this book may now, in all fairness, be given to the public. For the son is gone to rejoin that much-loved mother in the tomb, and the universal respect of posterity is attached to the smallest recollections of the great genius we have mourned and

lost. The *Manuscript of my Mother*, with the *Unedited Memoirs* of his youth, complete the history which M. de Lamartine has already published of his life. They contain details on his childhood and youth, the more precious as they are the more authentic, having the very mother of the poet as witness to their accuracy; and that mother, a noble and worthy woman, who has recorded in her journal, for her own satisfaction, the daily events in her home.

Since the purchase of this manuscript by the editors, who publish it to-day, its appearance has been retarded by the events which have filled all France with desolation and woe. Now that the return of peace and order enable us once more to turn our minds to the enjoyment of literary pursuits, it seems a favourable moment to bring Lamartine again before the public. After such trials and such bitter humiliations, France needs to turn back to the works of her great writers, to

count up her glories, and to contemplate once more the lustre of her genius in those who have carried highest and furthest the brilliancy of her fame, and awakened the best sympathies of her people. Lamartine is one of these. In days less disastrous and less troubled, although often saddened by the recollection of revolutions and wars, he let us hear for the first time his song of love, of melancholy, and of hope. Is it not a curious predestination which has to-day called forth, from the silence of the grave, the last and saddest notes of this grand and religious poet, to echo through our ruins? The resuscitation of the name of Lamartine is doubly opportune at this moment for another reason. Although politics have been well-nigh excluded from this work, it will not the less remind us of the great republican of 1848—of the man who, during that revolutionary crisis, showed France how a republic could become the only true refuge from revolution and anarchy. This

republic, which he alone had conceived, and of which his name remains as the symbol, this republic, free, generous, protectress of all rights, human and divine, and of all legitimate interests, is that which we are seeking to establish now; for in this way alone can we be preserved from the violence of democracy on the one hand, and the rashness of a blind reaction on the other. More than one of Lamartine's disciples, now sitting in the ranks of the National Assembly, are striving at this very hour to maintain the government of a republic based on these principles, and to develop republican ideas. May the mantle of their master fall upon them, and upon all those who labour for the same end, with a heart as devoted and true, and a conviction as sincere!

In an ode on Lamartine, an American poet has said, that the Republic of 1848, although only in embryo, was the grandest work of the great poet; just as the most beautiful produc-

tion of Michael Angelo was the unfinished bust of Brutus. If, as we fondly hope, this work, interrupted during his life, should be completed by other hands—if liberty be really established in France on a solid basis, the name which graces the first page of this book should be likewise the first engraved on the pedestal of the statue of the Republic.

L. DE RONCHAUD.

PARIS: *July* 8, 1871.

NOTE.—This Edition is published under the direction of the Society which has become proprietor of the works of M. de Lamartine.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A MATTER, solely relating to family affairs, which it would be useless to mention to the world, has led to the publication of the following little Manuscript. It was never intended for anything but private circulation. At best it was only meant to form part of those family archives which seem to bind together the past with the living generation—a kind of paper which children or grandchildren, nephews or nieces find now and then in the dusty drawer of some old-fashioned walnut-wood bureau, and which they turn over from curiosity, or some idle autumn or winter evening. As, from no fault of ours,

this Manuscript has been withdrawn from the privacy of the home circle, for which it was written, and will henceforth fall under the criticism of cold and indifferent readers, we can only dedicate it to the family of that beautiful, loving, and pious mother, who had poured out her whole heart in these pages without ever foreseeing that she would not have the time to burn them before her death. We would almost beg of others not to read them, for they will not find what they seek for in an ordinary book. The only interest of this manuscript is for those to whom this noble woman was related by ties of blood or parentage; and perhaps for those two or three chosen friends in her own neighbourhood, and for a few old servants, who never mention her name without tears; and for the peasants in the villages round her home, who, on Sundays and holidays, may be seen winding

down from the mountains on a pilgrimage to her grave, and whose footsteps, for upwards of twenty-eight years, have worn away the grass on the pathway which leads to her tomb.

ST. POINT: *November* 2, 1858.

MEMOIRS

OF

MY MOTHER.

I.

To-day is the 2nd of November—the day called amongst us that of the Dead, or of '*All Souls.*' Whenever I am free, I pass this day in the stillness of recollection and devotion at St. Point, to be as near as possible to the little village cemetery, which I can enter by a side-door in my garden-wall.

There, in the soil she loved best, lies my mother; and close to her is a little grave, smaller than her own, like the cradle by the side of the mother's bed. Of this little coffin I dare not, even in imagination, lift the lid, for fear of seeing what I am never more to look upon this side of Heaven!

II.

During this short and shivering autumn day, I strive to withdraw my thoughts from all living objects to dwell in silence with

those souls who have gone before me to their eternal rest. I wander through the darkest paths of the wood, which, by its dropping yellow leaves, seems to signify the gradual decay and death of all created things. It seems as if even nature, during this sad month, took part in the mournful elegy, and sympathised with the ever-living sorrow in the heart of man.

I walk backwards and forwards on the wet grass, with no aim or object but to tread in the same footsteps as those much-loved ones who, in former years, walked by my side in these self-same paths. My feet seem sometimes rooted to the ground when I come to those old giant trees, lords of the forest, who seem to know no change, and under whose shade old and young, mother and children, uncles and aunts, merry cousins or old family friends, used to group in the summer time. I seem still to hear the buzz of voices and the happy laugh of the little ones, mingled with the ripple of the neighbouring stream. Alas! never again will they sit on those old gnarled roots, or lie on the soft grass beyond. But their pre-

sence on this spot is to me so real, that sometimes I can scarcely help fancying I have missed the turn, and that I shall find them in a few moments in some other path.

III.

There is one of these sites, especially, which seems to me haunted by such shades of the departed. It is only about a hundred yards from the house. A path leads towards the forest, bordered by quick-set hedges, which divide it on one side from a great field of arable land, and on the other from a bit of sloping park-like ground, on which groups of cattle are feeding or ruminating under the shade of trees scattered here and there; the sun lighting up their red and white backs as they listlessly chew the cud and whisk away the flies that interfere with their peace. This little shadeless path makes one appreciate still more the cool dark freshness of the wood beyond, which one insensibly hurries to reach, without scarcely noticing the quivering aspen and willow, watered by the stream rushing through the meadows, which fringe the

edge of the forest. Passing through these outskirts of the wood, we come to gnarled, hollow trunks of oak and great beech trees, clothed as with a mantle of velvety moss; and large chesnuts, with their mighty outstretched arms and pointed lance-like leaves. Then the path stops suddenly, and you come by an abrupt descent into a little hollow dell or valley, bathed in all the radiance of the summer's sun; the tangled beauty of which merges at last into the cultivated fields beyond. Here a fine sort of grass, continually eaten down by sheep and goats, grows thick and soft, like the velvety patches seen here and there in the crevices of the Alpine rocks. The flowers which grow here are small and low, but of a delicious scent; and when you stoop to gather and examine minutely the form and colour of each, you feel that Providence has bestowed on these nearly imperceptible objects as much love and care as on the rarest hothouse plants. The bees and butterflies and millions of winged insects without a name, which buzz and flutter in the noonday sun, love this tiny valley, where

they suck the honey from its fragrant flowers, and fill the air with that soft murmuring sound which tells so true a tale of life and joy.

IV.

On the opposite bank of this valley stand forty-five old oaks, apparently forgotten by the woodman, and shading the edge of the ravine. Purple and white heather, violets and dog-roses, carpet the ground beneath them with colours as soft and varied as those of a Syrian woof. These grand old trees, battered by the storms of centuries, are bare and leafless on the side most exposed to the blast; but, towards the valley, their trunks are still smooth and polished, like men who have attained to a green old age. They spread their leafy branches lovingly over the soft turf below them, while their old roots, covered with lichens, start out here and there from their grassy covering.

V.

It was at the feet of these old oaks that I used to light my gipsy fires as a child; and,

despite the rain of so many winters, their rude trunks are still blackened with the smoke. There again, in riper years, I wrote down in pencil the many poetical fancies which were always coursing through my brain, as the soft summer breeze swept through the branches above my head. There, too, in days of still greater happiness and fuller joy, we came, old and young, to pass the hot moments of the day as in a summer drawing-room. Nothing was wanting to the beauty and picturesqueness of the spot; neither the rustic pillars formed by the old stems; nor the flickering and exquisite green of the foliage above our heads; nor the sweet and varied notes of the thrush or the nightingale, singing by their nests; nor the cushions, soft as down, formed by the moss growing at the foot of the old trunks; nor the trickle of the little stream winding through the tall reeds, and losing itself in the meadows below; nor, last and best of all, the grand outline of the mountains beyond, grouped like those of Greece, and seen here and there through the waving branches, like a beautiful panorama from an

open window through floating, gauzy curtains.

VI.

One scene especially, on this spot, remains graven on my memory; and is revived by seeing the sunset once more gild the withered branches of these old trees.

Seated on the roots of one of the most venerable amongst them was a woman, bowed with age, the wool of whose distaff was not whiter than her fine soft hair. From time to time she exchanged a few words with a young companion in a strange language. The expression of her face was one of perfect peace—of a day at its close, waiting for its heavenly reward, but seeing itself born again, as it were, in the young generation around her.

Another woman, in the prime of life, seated near her, was holding a book, which she opened from time to time to read a passage, and then shut it again, as if to reflect on what she had read. By the quiet recollection and soft gravity of her face, one feels that she is reading something which speaks to her of eternity. From time to time her eyelids

droop, and then she raises her dark expressive eyes heavenwards. Her face is pale and even somewhat ascetic; but the delicate lines are of an exquisite moral beanty. Hers is less a body than an earthly covering to a truly beautiful soul: but a tender smile and a natural graceful courtesy of manner temper what would otherwise be perhaps too austere. She looks around her on all this world of beauty with glistening eyes, and when they fall on me, they insensibly pause and grow more tender. She is a mother contemplating the happiness of a son.

VII.

A little lower down, on a velvety green throne, flickered by light and shade, was a younger woman with fair hair, blue eyes, and a tall and supple figure, sketching on her knees. She was reproducing the beautiful landscape we have described, lit up, as it was, by continual accidents of colour, by the soft blue smoke which rose from a cottage below, and by a group of goats who were scrambling on the rocks above. She was interrupted,

however, at almost every stroke, by the joyous cries of a beautiful child of four years old, who was in an ecstasy at having discovered a new floral treasure in the moss in the shape of a yellow buttercup, and threw it, moss and all, on the top of the paper, sure to have a kiss in return. Then she ran back, and striving to seize a brilliant dragon-fly, poised on a flower at her feet, fell all her length on the soft moss, and seemed to disappear in a cloud of thick flowing hair, made more golden still by the sunlight. All that was seen of her little head was something like a skein of gold silk, such as silkworm workers hang on a garden hedge to dry, after having carefully wound it off the cocoon.

In the darkest corner of this oak wood a young man was watching this scene of domestic love and country charm. He walked from one old stem to another, the thick moss deadening the sound of his feet, and holding in his hand a book of which the pages were yet blank. Yet at intervals he stopped and jotted down certain lines in pencil.

What I wrote that day will be found in the

the Appendix to this memoir.* Alas! I little thought that these verses would so soon be watered by tears!

VIII.

Towards evening I returned with slow step to the house, and shut myself up in my little room upstairs, of which the window, looking on the village steeple, seemed to gather and reproduce, as it were, the echo of the passing bell, peeling solemnly between the gusts of wind. For nature and religion combine at this season, and on this day, to bring back the thoughts of the living to those of the dead. The bell-ringer stationed in the tower, from the morning of the 2nd of November till the dawn of the following day, patiently sounds through the still hours of the night that solemn knell of hopes for ever fled, and sorrows ever green—a sound which seems to bring back the memory of past agony as

* *Translator's note.*—It has been found impossible to translate these verses without spoiling them; and the same with the one entitled 'the Village Bell.' They are, therefore, reproduced in the Appendix as in the original.

vividly as when the dust of the sexton in the churchyard first fell on the coffin which enclosed what we held most dear. This bell, moved as it were by the incessant blows of the clapper, at times gives forth a broken and tortured sound, like the fibres of a breaking human heart; and it is this impression which I strove to express in the verses which will likewise be found in the Appendix to these pages.

IX.

The season fixed upon by the Calendar for the anniversary of the dead, is in harmony with the mourning and terrors of the grave. Nature weeps like the human heart; the very elements, towards the end of the year, seem to struggle in an unknown agony; the prolonged equinox brings those gusts of wind familiarly known as 'death warrants;' furious blasts of wind and rain batter against our window panes; the whirlwind scatters far and wide clouds of dead leaves, in the midst of which, like cries of distress, the cawing of the rooks is heard, whom the breaking branches

have disturbed. The violence of the gale threatens the safety of the roof; one might fancy that the spirits of darkness had risen from the tombs, and were fighting and groaning in mid air. Distinct voices are often heard in the midst of the roar of the storm. Distinct knocks, too, on the windows and the doors, as if to force us by violence or from pity to open the empty chambers of the souls who have inhabited them. I like this din of the elements, and, in the very shivering it inspires, I find food for recollection as I sit by the fire-light on those self-same stone steps, worn and polished by the feet of those who are now lying so near me. I gather round me, during those terrible nights of recollection of past joys, all that I can find of their dear traces about the house. Eighteen little manuscript books, bound in paper of different shades, are scattered round me on the floor. I open first one, then the other; read a few words and shut it up; then open a second and a third, and find such and such a date of such and such a year; and I read on and on till my eyes are blinded with tears, and I can

bear no more. These little journals are my mother's.

Our mother (as I have already said in my *Confidences*) never wrote for the sake of writing, still less to be admired; but she wrote a great deal for herself, so as to find in this little register of her conscience, and of the domestic events of her life, a moral mirror into which she frequently looked to compare herself with what she had been at other periods of her life, and to strive through this retrospect every day to become better. This habit of taking stock, as it were, of the state of her soul (a habit which she continued to the last day of her life), produced fifteen to twenty tiny volumes, which I might call revelations of the intimate communion between herself and God. These little books I have the happiness of possessing, and in them I find her very self—still living, still loving; one, in fact, on whose breast I can take refuge when all other human comfort is gone from me.

She did not write with much power of conception, or with that variety of imagery which characterises some people's compositions. But

she wrote as she spoke, with that sober, clear simplicity of one who never thought of herself, and who asked for words to express her thoughts just as she would ask for clothes to dress and not to adorn her body. Her superiority was not in her style, but in her soul. The genius of women lies in their hearts, because women's works are all deeds of love. It was this peculiar attraction which brought every one who came near her under my mother's influence. Her superiority was unperceived at first, and accepted without offence, for it was unknown and unsought for by herself, though acknowledged and felt by all who loved her.

X.

Having these books in my possession, I have often thought to pilfer their treasures (now lying in the most secret drawer of my writing table) and to make some little extracts from them, together with a short commentary for the use of my family; so that what remains on earth of my dear mother's mind and heart should not evaporate without having been at least known to her grandchildren. This

thought came back upon me with still greater force to-night at the sound of that bell which vibrates over her grave, and which seems to reproach me with being mute, while the very bronze makes itself heard in her praise. The years pass on; the evening of life draws near; time and dust have begun to tarnish these pages of which the ink is already getting yellow. I am in one of those moments of solitude, of recollection, and of leisure, when, in the twilight, our thoughts detach themselves from the cares of active life and mount upwards to their source; as water, which always finds its proper level, though it be impossible to ascertain its spring. I feel that this is the hour when I should accomplish the design with which filial piety has inspired me, and exhume the precious relics for the sake of those near and dear to me. These lines will never be read save by the light of the fire of the hearth of that mother's home, and by eyes that have wept for her. To others the narrative would have no interest. But of all the pictures which nature and history present to the mind of a sensible and reflective man, none is in

reality more deeply interesting than the secret record of a soul struggling with the anxieties, joys, sorrows, and vicissitudes of life, even should that soul be one of a woman unknown to fame, and buried in the domestic obscurity of family life. The interest of the drama lies not in the scene itself, but in the heart which inspires the narrative. Should a tear fall for the downfal of an empire, or for the crumbling away of a cottage, the source of that tear is the same.

XI.

We love to know the outward appearance of a person whose soul speaks to our own. I will give you then a portrait of my mother, not drawn from memory, but from some confidential notes I made years ago of the first pages in her life's history.

Alix des Roys (that was my mother's name) was the daughter of M. des Roys, Comptroller General of the Finances of Monsr. the Duke of Orleans. Madame des Roys, his wife, was governess to the prince's children, and a great favourite of that beautiful and virtuous Duchess of Orleans whom the Revolution re-

spected, even while driving her from her palace, and condemning her son to exile and her husband to the scaffold. M. and Madame des Roys were lodged in the Palais Royal in winter and at St. Cloud in summer. My mother was born there. She was brought up, in consequence, with the future king, Louis Philippe, in the affectionate yet respectful familiarity natural to two children of the same age, sharing in the same lessons and the same sports.

How often used my mother to speak of this boy, whom one Revolution drove from his country, while another replaced him on the throne! There was not a fountain, or an avenue, or a lawn in the gardens of St. Cloud which we did not know by heart, through the recollections of her childhood, long before we had seen them with our own eyes. St. Cloud had been to her what Milly was to me—the cradle of all her early thoughts and impressions, the spot where she had grown and developed both in body and mind, like the trees in the great park. All the famous names of the eighteenth century were graven in her

heart, for she had lived with them at an age when impressions are the strongest and the most lasting

Madame des Roys, her mother, was a woman of great merit. Her functions as mistress in the house of the first prince of the blood, made her the centre and point of attraction to all the remarkable personages of that time. Voltaire, during his short and last journey to Paris (which was one succession of triumphs), came to pay a visit to the young princes. Although my mother was only seven or eight years old at that time, she was sufficiently impressed by what passed around her to understand the remarkable character of their guest. Voltaire's manner and dress, his walking stick, peculiar habits, and words, remained graven on her childish memory like the inscription on an antediluvian stone in our mountains. D'Alembert, Laclos, Madame de Genlis, Buffon, Florian, the English historian Gibbon, Grimm, Morellet, Necker, eminent statesmen, men of letters, poets, philosophers—all met in the *salons* of Madame des Roys. She established intimate relations with several of them,

and especially with one of the most eminent amongst them—Jean Jacques Rousseau. My mother, though very pious and devoted to the Catholic faith, always preserved an admiration for that great man, perhaps because she realised in him more than a genius—a truly great soul. She did not certainly follow the faith of her genius; but her religion was the religion of the heart.

XII.

The Duke of Orleans, who was also Count of Beaujolais, had the nomination of a certain number of ladies to the chapter of Salles, which was a dependence of his duchy. It was thus by him that my mother was appointed *chanoinesse* at the age of fifteen or sixteen. I have still her portrait done at that time, besides those which my father and her sisters have so often shown to me. She is represented in her dress as chanoinesse—young, tall, of a fine and flexible figure, with beautiful white rounded arms, covered to the elbow by tight black sleeves. On her breast lies the gold cross of the chapter. Thrown over her

beautiful and luxuriant black hair, is a veil of black lace hanging down in graceful folds on each side. Her brilliant colouring and finely formed figure stand out alone amidst all the dark and sombre colouring, and heighten the general effect. Time has a little faded the colouring of the picture of this girl of fifteen; but the features are as pure and regular as if the brush of the painter were not yet dry on the palette. It is easy for us to retrace that sweet smile, speaking of interior peace, that inexpressible tenderness of look, and especially that peculiar brightness, so full of intelligence and feeling, which seemed to dart from her deep-set eyes, slightly shaded by their eyelids which drooped a little as if she would not use at once all the magic power they contained. Only, by glancing at this portrait, you understand at once the amount of passionate love which such a woman must have inspired; and all the devotion with which she afterwards filled the hearts of her children. My father was indeed worthy, from his noble character, and handsome personal appearance, to win the heart of a brave and loving woman. He was

no longer very young when he married her, being thirty-eight years old. But to one of a long-lived race, who was to die still young in mind and body at ninety years old, with all his hair and all his teeth, and that severe and imposing beauty which crowns a virtuous old age, thirty-eight was the prime of life. His tall figure, military gait, and distinguished features made him the very type of one born to command. A peculiar frankness of manner and an honest pride of independence were two of his most remarkable characteristics. Although he had plenty of wit and fun, he never affected any frivolous graces. Though feeling intensely at the bottom of his heart, he often appeared cold and indifferent; for he was afraid of himself, and almost ashamed of the depth of his feelings.

There never was a man in this world who had a more humble opinion of himself, or who strove to conceal more, with the modesty of a very woman, the qualities which in our eyes exalted him almost to the position of a hero. But I did not understand him at first. I thought him hard and austere, when he was

but strict and just. As to his tastes, they were as simple as himself. Patriarchal and soldier-like in his habits, his occupations were in unison with his character. He divided the year between hunting, shooting, and fishing when in the country, and the duties of his regiment, which included the care of his horses, his arms, and the regimental routine, which he scrupulously observed and ennobled by his enthusiasm for a soldier's life. Till he married, his regiment was more to him than his own family. He cared for nothing beyond his rank as captain of cavalry and the esteem of his comrades. The honour of his corps was as dear to him as his own. He knew by heart the name of every officer and soldier in his regiment; and one and all were devoted to him. Without any kind of ambition or hankering for a larger fortune or a higher rank, his ideal of happiness was to be a first-rate officer and the soul of honour; to serve his king for the love of God; to pass six months of the year in a garrison town with his regiment, and the other six months in a little country home with his wife and child-

ren—a simple, primitive-minded man, in fact, a little modified by his soldier's life—such was my father.

The terrible Revolution, misfortunes of different kinds, and, above all, the influence of my mother, modified his ideas very much as years went on. I have myself watched the gradual completion and development of that noble nature after seventy years of battle with life. He was like one of those oaks which renew their youth and freshness up to the very hour when the axe is laid to the root of the tree. At eighty he was still moving onwards and upwards towards perfection.

XIII.

His constancy and that of my mother overcame all the difficulties which want of fortune and family prejudices threw in the way of their union. They were married at the very time when the Revolution was about to break out, and overthrow all human institutions. The Constituent Assembly was already formed, and had begun its work. It had sapped, with consummate skill, the whole fabric of privi-

leges and prejudices on which the social order of France mainly rested. Popular tumult, like the waves of the sea in an angry storm, had gathered round the Tuileries and Hôtel de Ville, the Bastille and Versailles, threatening the existence of order throughout Paris. But the enthusiasm, even of the nobility, for some great political and religious change, was still paramount. In spite of so many sinister warnings, people fancied that the storm would blow over. There was no past scale whereby to measure the height to which such an overflow of new ideas might reach. My father had not left the service when he married. He foresaw nothing more than a few months of struggle against temporary disorder, the King to defend, and perhaps a few drops of blood to be shed in the cause of duty. The first flashes of lightning preceding the storm in which a throne was to be submerged, and Europe shaken for at least half a century, were warnings utterly lost on my mother or himself, in the first joys of their mutual love, and with such fair prospects opening out to them of future happiness. I

recollect once seeing a willow branch torn from its trunk by a gale of wind, and floating on an arm of the Saône, which had overflown its banks. A nightingale was still sitting on her nest in this perilous position, amidst the foam of the torrent, while the male bird was following her the while, and cheering her with his song!

XIV.

Hardly had they, in fact, tasted the happiness for which they had so long sighed, than my poor father and mother were compelled to separate, and to break up their home—perhaps for ever. It was the moment of the great French emigration. At first, this was not (as it became later) the only safety, and the one escape from persecution and death. It was a perfect mania, for the time, with all the French nobility. The example set by royalty became contagious. Whole regiments lost all their officers in one night. Men seemed to be ashamed all of a sudden to remain with France and their King. It required great courage and firmness of character to resist

this foolish epidemic, which people disguised under the name of honour. My father, however, had this courage, and positively refused to emigrate. But when an oath was tried to be enforced on the officers of the army, repugnant to his conscience as the servant of the King, he sent in his resignation. The 10th of August drew near, and its approach made itself felt. Everyone knew beforehand that the Tuileries would be attacked, the life of the King threatened, and that the Constitution of 1791, that momentary truce between representative royalty and the sovereign people, would be either destroyed or triumph in a sea of blood. The devoted friends of the monarchy and those who were personally and religiously attached to the King, gathered round Louis XVI. in this hour of peril, and formed themselves into a bodyguard, among whom my father was one of the foremost and the most devoted.

My poor mother was then near her first confinement; but she did not attempt to keep him back. Even in the midst of her tears, she could not comprehend life without honour,

or hesitate a single moment between pain and duty.

So my father started, without hope, but without hesitation. He fought with the body-guard and the Swiss to defend the palace. When Louis XVI. escaped, the fight became a massacre. My father was wounded by a musket ball in the garden of the Tuileries. He made his escape, but was arrested in crossing the river opposite the Boulevard des Invalides, dragged to Vaugirard, and imprisoned for some hours in a cellar. He was discovered and saved by the gardener of one of his family, who was an officer of the municipality, and who miraculously recognised him. Thus saved from what appeared to be certain death, he managed to return to my mother, and lived in humble obscurity in the country until the day when the revolutionary torrent had fairly invaded France, and given no choice to the nobility but a prison or the scaffold.

XV.

In the middle of the night, the people dragged my grandfather from his home, in

spite of his eighty-four years; then my grandmother, almost as old and far more infirm than himself; afterwards my two uncles, and my three aunts, who were nuns already driven out of their convents, and who had been forced to take refuge in their old home. The whole family were thrown pellmell into a cart with an escort of gens d'armes, and conducted, amidst hisses and cries of 'Death to the Aristocrats!' to the town of Autun. There an immense prison had been prepared to receive all who were considered 'suspected' in the county. My father, for some unknown reason, was separated from the rest of his family, and imprisoned in Mâçon. My mother, who was nursing me at the time, was left alone in my grandfather's house, under the guard of some soldiers of the revolutionary army. Is it surprising that men who have gone through such days as these should have brought a tinge of sadness and melancholy into the French character? Virgil, Cicero, Tibullus, Horace even, did they not impress the same character on the Roman people? Were they not born, like us, during the great

civil wars of Rome, and in the midst of the proscriptions of their best men—of Marius, of Scylla, and of Cæsar? Think of the impressions of terror and of pity which must have agitated the wives and mothers of those men! Think of the bitter tears shed by my own mother over my childish cradle, whilst her whole family were cast into a prison which generally ended in death! At the very moment when the husband whom she adored was on the very steps of the scaffold, and that she was herself a prisoner in an empty house, the fierce soldiers who guarded her sneered at her tears, and made a crime of her tenderness while they insulted her sorrow!

XVI.

Behind my grandfather's hotel, which stretched from one street to the other, there was a low dark house communicating with the larger one by a long shady passage, and a narrow damp court like a well. This house was occupied by certain old servants of my grandfather's, whom he had pensioned off, but who loved still to perform such little ser-

vices for him as were in their power, with the kind of feudal feeling which still exists in some old families. When the great house was confiscated to the state, my mother, with one or two servants, took refuge in this little cottage. But she had another object in view.

Just in front of the windows, on the opposite side of this little passage, which was silent and narrow as a street in Genoa, rise the high walls, pierced here and there with narrow windows, of the Ursuline convent. It was a solemn, austere-looking building with the beautiful portal of an old church on one side, and on the other a large court and garden surrounded by high and gloomy-looking walls. As the ordinary prisons of the town were already overfull, the revolutionary tribunal of Mâcon had converted this convent into a supplementary prison. Chance or Providence willed that my father should be confined in this very place. Between him and what he loved best in the world there was only a wall and the width of the little street. By another chance it happened, that this Ursuline convent was as well known to him

as his own house. One of my grandfather's sisters, Madame de Lusy, was abbess of the Ursuline convent of Mâcon. As a child he went constantly to play in the convent; so that there was not a cell or a staircase or an alley of the garden or a hiding-place in the loft, every hole and corner of which was not familiar to him and to his brothers and sisters. In this very convent he now found himself imprisoned, and so felt at home at once. What was still more fortunate, the jailer, a republican, it is true, but of a corruptible sort, had been one of his old regiment fifteen years before. His new position had not changed his heart. Full of respect and affection towards his former colonel, he was touched to the quick when my father was brought in to him, and when the doors of the Ursuline convent closed on the new prisoner, it was the republican and not the captive who shed tears.'

My father found himself, besides, in very good company. The prison contained two hundred gentlemen of stainless reputation, although 'suspected' by the department.

They were huddled together in the parlours, in the refectory, in the corridors, and in the cells of the old convent. My father asked but one favour of his jailer, and that was to be lodged alone in one little corner of the loft. A high, oval window looking down into the street would give him the consolation of seeing through the bars the roof of his own house. This favour was granted to him. He made himself, therefore, as comfortable as he could under the sloping roof of this little garret, with a few planks and a miserable mattress for a bed. During the day he came downstairs to share the meals of his companions in captivity, and to talk over the state of affairs; which, however, could only end in conjectures, as the prisoners were absolutely prohibited from any communication from without, nor were they allowed to write or receive letters. In my father's case, however, this terrible isolation was soon to cease.

The same thought which had induced him to ask the jailer for the little room in the loft, where he could watch for hours the roof of his own home, had inspired my mother with

the idea of going up herself to a little garret in her house, and seating herself close to a window looking on the convent, where she could see without being seen. Through her tears she thus could watch the building which contained him who was dearer to her than all the world besides. When the same thought fills two hearts which are inseparably united, they invariably contrive to meet at last. She soon discovered the place of his captivity, and across the narrow street it was easy for each to detect the other. Signs took the place of words lest their voices should betray their communications to the sentinels below. Once having found one another, many hours of each day were passed by them at these opposite windows. Their whole souls spoke through their eyes. It came into my mother's head to write in large letters one or two lines each day containing the few words it was important for the prisoner to know. He, on the other hand, having no means of writing, answered by signs. Henceforth a regular communication was established between them; but a wife's love imagined a way of making

those relations even more complete. My father had some bows and arrows, with which I often played as a child. My mother determined that they should serve her purpose. She practised diligently in her own room, and when she had become skilful enough to make sure that she would not miss her mark at a certain distance, she fastened a string to an arrow and drawing a strong bow sent both arrow and cord right into my father's window. My father quickly hid the arrow, and drawing the cord towards him it brought him a letter. During the night, she managed to pass in that way paper, pens, and ink into his little cell. He answered at his leisure. Before day-light, my mother used to draw in the cord which brought to her, in return, long and touching effusions from the prisoner, in which he poured out all the tenderness and sadness of his heart, and strove to console his wife by speaking of their child. My poor mother brought me every day in her arms up to the garret, making me stretch my little hands towards the bars of the prison; and then pressing my forehead to her breast would cover

me with kisses, and lavish upon me every kind of endearment, making the poor captive understand all the while that these demonstrations of affection were intended for him, and were only bestowed upon me as his representative.

XVII.

This was at the time when the different provinces of France were divided among the proconsuls of the Convention, who, under the name of a Committee of Public Safety, exercised an absolute and often sanguinary power over their country-men. The life and death, wealth or misery, of whole families depended on the breath of these men, or on a stroke of their pen. My poor mother, who felt that the axe was every moment hanging over the head of him whom she loved most on earth, had very often thought of throwing herself at the feet of one of these emissaries of the Convention to implore her husband's release. Her youth, her beauty, her isolation, the child which she was suckling at her breast, to say nothing of the advice of my father himself, had hitherto kept her back. But the

entreaties of the rest of her family, who had been thrown into the dungeons of Autun, imperiously demanded of her a step no less repugnant to her pride than to her political opinions. She, therefore, obtained from the revolutionary authorities a passport for Lyons and Dijon. How often has she related to me what she suffered at that time!—her repugnance — her discouragements — her fears, when, after endless abortive attempts and numberless entreaties (often, even, repulsed with brutal rudeness), she found herself at last tremblingly in the presence of one of these so-called representatives of the people! Sometimes this man was of the lowest and roughest class; one who would not listen to the tears and prayers of a woman, and who sent her away with threats, as an accomplice in her husband's so-called crime. At other times she was brought before one of a gentler mould, whom the sight of her deep sorrow and despair would touch, in spite of himself; but the presence of his colleagues hardened his outward manner, and he was compelled to refuse with the lips what his heart would

perhaps have granted to her. One of these men, by name Javogues, was, of all the proconsuls, the one who left the most favourable impression on my poor mother's mind. She had obtained an audience of him at Dijon, and he addressed her, to her surprise, with real sympathy and respect. She had brought me in her arms into the court, so that he might be touched by the despair of the young mother and the innocence of the little child. Javogues made her sit down, and expressed his regrets at the rigorous nature of the duties which the safety of the republic had imposed upon him. He took me on his lap, and seeing my mother's gesture of fright lest he should let me fall, exclaimed: 'Don't be afraid, *citoyenne*, we, republicans, have children of our own;' and when I began to smile and play with the ends of his tricolour scarf he added, 'Your child is a very fine one for the son of an aristocrat! Bring him up aright to serve his country as a good citizen.' He then said a few kind words of apparent interest in my father's case, and gave her some hopes of his eventual liberation. Perhaps it was through

Javogues' influence that he owed being 'forgotten' in his prison; for to be *remembered* at that time meant condemnation and the scaffold.

On her return to Mâçon, my mother shut herself up more determinately than ever in her little room opposite the Ursuline convent. From time to time when the nights were very dark, the moon was not risen, and the street lamp lights were extinguished by the wind, the old cord was passed from one window to the other, and my poor father could spend one or two anxious hours with those he loved best. But otherwise there was no amelioration in his position.

Eighteen months passed away in this manner—a whole year and a half!

At last came the ninth Thermidor, and my father was once more free. My mother ran to Autun to fetch her old parents, who had likewise been spared a violent death, and brought them back to their former home, which had been so long shut up and desolate. Not long after their return, my grandfather and grandmother died in peace in their beds, full

of years and honour. They had passed through the terrible storm unscathed. Their children had been almost miraculously spared to them, and they might have a reasonable hope that a time of comparative tranquillity was at hand, and that the lives of those they left behind would be passed in peace and happiness.

XVIII.

According to the old law and the general custom, my grandfather's fortune would have passed entirely to his eldest son; but the new regulations had suppressed the rights of primogeniture, and as the vows of poverty made by my aunts, who were nuns, had no value in the eyes of the law, the family were all to share the property alike. My grandfather's estates were large, both in Burgundy and Franche-Comté. Had my father consented to take his share, like his brothers and sisters, he would have obtained at once one of those beautiful and independent properties which would have changed our whole position. But his scrupulous deference for his father's intentions prevented his giving even a thought to

any violation of them after his death. The change in the law and the abolition of primogeniture was a recent bit of legislation; and although, in theory, it appeared to him just, in practice he considered that it was doing violence to the wishes of the testator. To claim his rights would have appeared to him to be robbing his eldest brother and abusing his position. So he made up his mind to renounce the succession, and to be content with the humble settlements which had been made at the time of his marriage. He accepted poverty when one word or act on his part would have made him rich. The rest of the family were not troubled with such scruples, and each of his brothers and sisters had his or her share. My father would have nothing, and determined to be contented with the little property at Milly which had been given him on his marriage, and only amounted to two or three hundred a year. My mother's own fortune had been very small. The lucrative and honourable employments which her family had held in the household of the Duke of Orleans had ceased with the Revolution. The Royal Family was

in exile. The Princesses often wrote to my mother. They did not forget the warm friendship which, as children, had made them overlook all differences of rank, and never ceased to remember her, whether in trial or in prosperity.

XIX.

My father did not consider that the Revolution had released him from his duty to his flag, and this feeling shut the door on all hope of promotion in his military career. Three hundred a year, and a small, ruined unfurnished country house, with a wife and a large family of children, was something very like genteel poverty. But he had the reward of his own conscience, a devoted love for his wife, great simplicity of tastes, a habit of strict though generous economy, a perfect conformity between his wishes and his position, and, above all, a thorough trust in God. Thus armed, he could encounter bravely the difficulties of his position. My mother, young and beautiful, and brought up in all the luxuries of a splendid court, accepted, with smiling resignation and even with inward joy, the

exchange from the gorgeous apartments and beautiful gardens of a palace, to the little unfurnished rooms of an old house which had been empty for half a century, and a miserable garden of a quarter of an acre in extent, enclosed with a rough stone wall, to which the dreams of her youth had now to be limited! But I have often heard them both say later, that, in spite of their small means, these first years of calm after the terrible storm of the Revolution, and of undisturbed enjoyment of their love for each other in this little solitary place, were among the happiest of their whole lives. Although my mother could not help suffering from the many little inconveniences of a poverty to which she had been so unaccustomed, she never set an undue value on riches. Often, when talking to me of those days, and pointing out the narrow limits of the little Milly property, she would say, 'It's very small, certainly; but it is big enough if we know how to proportion our tastes to our means. True happiness lies in ourselves. We should not be more content by extending our borders. One cannot measure one's happiness

like a garden, by the acre; it depends on the resignation of our will to His, for God has meted out equally the lot of rich and poor, so that we might each live in simple dependence upon Him.'

XX.

I have found an old description of my mother at thirty-five, and I am going to give it literally to my readers.

'The evening is closing in, the doors of the little country house are shut. The bark of the watch-dog outside gives notice from time to time of any strange step. A sharp autumn shower rattles against the window panes of two low windows, while the wind, blowing in gusts through the plane trees, and sweeping their branches towards the outside shutters, produce that melancholy whistle which we sometimes hear in a great pine wood before a storm. The room I am describing is large but nearly bare of furniture. At the bottom is a deep alcove in which stands a bed. The curtains of this bed are of white serge edged with blue. This is my mother's. On four wooden chairs at the foot of the bed rest two

cradles. They contain my two little sisters, who have been asleep for a long time. A cheerful fire of vine logs crackles on a stone hearth beyond, with a white marble chimney piece, of which the revolutionary hammer has broken the arms in the centre, together with the *fleurs de lys* ornaments on each side. Even the iron plate at the back of the fireplace has been turned inside out, because it bore on its surface the arms of the King. The ceiling is of old wooden beams blackened with smoke. There is no carpet or inlaid parquet, only square unvarnished tiles, and these broken in a hundred places by the heavy hob-nailed shoes of the peasants, who had made this room a dancing hall during my father's imprisonment. No paper or hangings of any sort adorn the walls. You see that the plaster is broken away in many places, showing the stone of the outside wall, just as a torn frock would display a little beggar child's legs! In one corner is an open piano with different pieces of music (among the rest, Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Divin du Village*) scattered over the instrument. Near the fireplace, in the

middle of the room, is a little card-table, of which the green baize cover is all marked with ink stains and with little holes in the stuff. On the table flare two tallow candles in two silver-plated candlesticks, which throw a little light and a good many flickering shadows on the whitewashed walls of the room. In front of the chimney-piece, with his arms resting on the table, sits a man holding a book in his hand. He is above the middle height and is strongly built. He is still in all the vigour of youth. His forehead is broad and good, his eyes are blue, his smile is singularly winning, and displays the brightest white teeth. His dress, his hair, and a certain military stiffness in his carriage, betray the half-pay officer. Any doubts on the subject would be dispelled by a glance at the sword, cavalry pistols, helmet, and silver-gilt trappings of his horse, which hang on the walls of a little room opening out of the large one. This man was my father, and that was his dressing-room.

'On a straw sofa, in a little angle formed by the chimney and the wall of the alcove, sat a woman still young in appearance, though she

had numbered thirty-five summers. Her figure had all the elegance and flexibility of a young girl. Her features are so delicate; her black eyes have such a calm and penetrating look; her transparent white skin with its blue veins still betray so vividly, by its ever varying colour, the emotions of the moment; her black soft thick hair still falls so silkily on her neck and shoulders, that a stranger looking at her would find it impossible to decide if she were eighteen or thirty-five. But no one who knew her would wish to sweep away a single one of those years which have only ripened her beauty by adding to its expression. This peculiar beauty of hers did not depend so much on the regularity of her features as on the harmony and grace of her whole person, and especially on the wonderful tenderness and love which beamed from her eyes, those true windows of the soul; eyes which would have lit up the plainest face with that light coming only from above. This young woman, half leaning against the cushions of the sofa, held a little girl on her lap, whose soft curly head had fallen fast asleep on her

shoulder. The child still held one of her mother's long black curls with which she had been playing before she had dropped into happy unconsciousness. Another little girl, somewhat older, was seated on a footstool at the side of the sofa, leaning her head of fair hair against her mother's knee. This young woman was my mother; the two children were my elder sisters. The two little ones were in their cradle.'

XXI.

Such was the daily life of our family when my mother began her journal, that is, on *the 11th of June*, 1801. Even in her childhood she had had the habit of writing down her private thoughts, probably in imitation of her companions at the Palais Royal, the pupils of Madame de Genlis; for the journal begins thus: 'I had begun, from the moment I could write at all, to jot down each day an exact account of all that I saw and felt, of all that happened around me, and of all the thoughts which the different events of my life had suggested. After a time, I burnt this journal, and gave up the habit for a long while. I

regret it now very much, and am sorry that I destroyed it, as I think it would have been useful to me later. I intend now, with the grace of God, to begin again, and to write simply and concisely, and as much as I can each day, the different things which may happen to me, adding what I shall have done ill or well. I think that this plan will help me very much in my self-examination, and will make me know myself better; and should, hereafter, these lines fall under the eyes of my children, it will not be without some interest for them. Perhaps, even, it may be of use to them when I am gone, as I shall frequently speak of them and of their different characters. I have now five children, after having lost one, four daughters and one son, who is called Alphonse. At this moment he is away from home, and beginning his classical education at Lyons. He is a good and amiable boy. May God make him pious, wise, and a good Christian; that is what I pray for with all my heart. The eldest of my girls is called Cecilia; she is seven and a half; very quick-tempered, but good. Eugénie, her sister,

is five and a half; she is a most sensitive child, but with a very loving heart. Cesarine is two years old, and little Susan is but nine months. I am still nursing her. The education of these four girls will not be an easy task. If it were not for the help of God, in whom I place all my confidence and hope, I should altogether despair of accomplishing it. But I can do all things through Him who strengtheneth me, and who is pleased to be glorified in the humblest and most miserable of His creatures. . . . In our house is a poor old relation—weak in mind as in body—I must look upon her as my sixth child, and treat her with the like care and tenderness. I have, besides, six servants to superintend. My God! how much do I need Thy help! My husband and I live almost always at Milly, where I am very happy. Lately, another place has become ours—St. Point. It is a good property and an agreeable country from its solitude, and its beautiful position in the mountains. For how many blessings have we not cause to thank Providence!

'My sister (Madame de Vaux) arrived here

to-day from Lyons: hers is the sweetest and most gentle nature I ever knew, and she is good without trouble or effort of any kind. She spoke to me of my boy, and told me all the pleasant things his masters say of him. May God bless him as I do from my heart! To-morrow I begin lessons with my little girls. It will need a great deal of patience and perseverance. After dinner they came to tell me that a poor old man, of whom I have been taking care, who lived alone in a mountain-hut with only a goat as his companion, is dead. I was very much vexed, and reproached myself for having neglected to go and visit him these last few days owing to the distance. It is true that I thought he was much better, but I ought not to have trusted to that at his age. I ought to have made it my business to look after him more. I am full of compunction about it. In fact I feel that I do not persevere steadily enough in the little good I try to do. I get weary very often, and give way to idleness or distractions which may not be in themselves culpable, but which are faults that hinder

my spiritual progress, and prevent my employing my time as well as I ought. Why was time given us but to work, day by day, and hour by hour, for God and for others? . .

'This evening I took a walk with my husband and my two eldest girls, and went through the vineyards, which are in flower. The whole air was embalmed with the scent. Our vines are our main source of revenue, not only for ourselves, but for our children, our servants, and our poor. If all that are now in flower turn into grapes, we shall be rich this year. May Providence preserve us from hail!

'We went close to the little hut where the poor old man died this morning. I wanted to go in and see him once more, and say a little prayer at the foot of his bed, but my husband would not let me. He was afraid that the sight of death would make too painful an impression on the children, as well as on myself. I wanted to ask that soul's forgiveness for not having been at hand to say a few words of consolation and hope during his agony, and to receive his last sigh. The door

was open; his poor little goat was continually trotting in and out bleating, as if to ask for help and pity from the passers-by; the faithful little beast made us cry. I got my husband's permission to send for it to-morrow after the funeral, and we will give it a home with our cows and the children's pet lambs.'

(This first page of my mother's journal shows what was the daily life of this woman, brought up in the most luxurious court in Europe, and thus transplanted into a humble country-home, a hundred leagues from Paris—a change which her great love for her husband and children made not only endurable, but even sweet. If you wish to have a more exact picture of this little house at Milly, where her domestic cares and duties kept her a prisoner winter and summer, you will find a prosaic description of it in my *Confidences*, and a poetical one in one of my sets of verses entitled *La Terre natale*. This is what I wrote eight years ago in my *Confidences*.)

XXII.

"Leaving the bed of the Saône, winding through the green meadows and fertile hills of Mâcon, and turning towards the little town and ruins of the old abbey of Cluny, the death-place of Abelard, you follow a hilly road which rises and dips like the waves of the in-coming tide. Right and left, little white-washed cottages are seen nestled here and there in the vineyards. Above, a range of bare and rocky mountains stretches across the plain; in the little grassy dells of which, here and there, flocks of sheep are feeding. At this distance they look like little white specks. At intervals certain masses of rock stand out from the rest, which time and storms have torn and indented until they have taken the shape of old fortified castles. Following this road round the base of the mountains, at about two hours' walk from the town, a narrow path to the left, shaded by weeping willows, leads to a rapid stream and to a mill on its banks, of which the wheel

gives forth a continual and somewhat melancholy sound.

This path winds under some alders by the side of the stream, which often, in fact, encroaches upon it when its running waters are swollen by rain; then it crosses the river by a picturesque little bridge, and rises by a winding but steep incline to a little group of houses roofed with bright old tiles, which are massed together on a little raised common. This is our village. A belfry of grey stone, in the shape of a pyramid, crowns the whole. The stony path winds in and out and over rude steps into the doors of each of these cottages. At the end of this path is a gateway a little higher and larger than the rest, giving entrance to the courtyard in which stands my father's house.

This house is completely hidden, and in fact invisible from the village and the high road. Built in a deep hollow of the valley, surrounded by farm buildings and trees, and backed likewise by a high mountain; it is only from its summit that looking down you catch a glimpse of this low, massive old house, which

seems to spring like a great black boulder-stone out of the rock, with a narrow little garden beyond. It is a square house of one story, with three large windows on each side. Its walls are rough and unplastered. The rain and a variety of mosses and lichens give it the look of the cloisters of an old abbey. On the side of the courtyard, the entrance is by a massive door of carved oak resting on a broad flight of five stone steps. But these steps, though of great size and depth, have been so battered by time and ill-usage that they are everywhere out of joint and out of repair, and weeds and nettles grow up in their interstices; while the frogs croak there in the summer evenings as continuously as in the neighbouring pond.

The door opens into a wide and well-lit corridor, but of which the size is diminished by massive, carved walnut-wood presses, which hold the family linen, and by sacks of wheat and flour for the use of the household. To the left is the kitchen, of which the ever-open door shows us a long oak table, with benches on each side. At all hours of the day peasants

are sitting at this table, and the cloth is always laid either for the workmen or for the many passers-by, to whom it is the custom to offer bread and cheese and wine in a country where you are a long way from a town, and where there is neither inn nor publichouse. To the left is the dining-room, which contains no ornament save a large old oak table, some chairs, and an old oak sideboard full of drawers and carved shelves—an heirloom in the family, which the present taste for antiquities has made fashionable. From the dining-room a door leads into the drawing-room which has two windows—one looking towards the court, and the other to the north, on the garden. A wooden staircase, which my father restored in stone, led to the single story where about ten rooms opened into a long, low passage. These rooms held the family, servants, and guests. This was the whole house, and this the roof which my mother used to call her 'Temple of Peace,' her 'Jerusalem!' This was the little warm nest which for so many years sheltered us from cold and wet, from hunger and worldly cares; this

the nest where death came to carry off by turns my father and mother, and from whence the children flew; one in one direction, one in the other, some to their eternal home! I have religiously preserved what was left—the straw, the moss, the down; and although the poor old nest is now cold and empty, I love to come and see it again. I sleep in it now and then, and try to fancy that, on waking, I shall again hear my mother's voice, my father's step, the joyous cries of my sisters, and all those sounds of youth and love which still echo for me among the old beams, but which I, alas! am the only one now to hear or to remember.

XXIII.

The exterior of this house corresponds with the interior. On the side of the courtyard, the view consists of barns, stables, winepresses, and wood ricks. The gate opening on the village street reveals an ever-moving picture of peasants passing to and fro to their fields and back again. They have their tools on their shoulders, and sometimes a long cradle in which a little child lies fast asleep. The

wife follows them to the vineyard nursing her last born babe. A goat with one or two kids generally winds up the procession, which stops to play for a moment with the dogs in the courtyard, and then bounds forward to rejoin the rest. On the other side of the street is the village oven, which is always smoking. This is the *rendezvous* of all the old people, the poor women knitting, and the little children warming themselves by the hot ashes. That is all that is to be seen from the drawing-room window which looks on the court. From the other window, looking towards the north, the eye ranges beyond the little garden and the roofs of some cottages, to an horizon of mountains almost always enveloped in clouds; and amidst them, sometimes dark, sometimes lit up by a brilliant ray of the setting sun, stands an old castle, partly in ruins, but forming a beautiful group of crenelated towers and bastions, which is the great feature of the whole country. If this castle were taken away, goodbye for ever to the wonderful effects of the evening light on its walls, or to the fantastic wreaths of mist and smoke which curl

round its keep, and seem to multiply its turrets! Nothing would remain but a dark mountain with a yellow ravine. A ship at sea, a ruin on a hill, makes a picture at once. This earth after all is but a drop-scene. What gives it life and interest to the eye is man. Where there is life, there is at once a centre of absorbing thought.

The back of the house looks upon the garden, if a little stone enclosure of a quarter of an acre deserves the name. At the bottom of the garden, the mountain rises insensibly; first richly cultivated and green with vines; then, by degrees, the vegetation disappears, and nothing remains but mosses which can scarcely be distinguished from the stones. Two or three great indented rocks break the uniformity of the line on the horizon. Not a tree or even a shrub grows higher than the heather which carpets the base of the mountain. Not a cottage, or a line of curling smoke betrays the presence of a living thing. It is, perhaps, this which gives the secret charm to the little garden. It is like a child's cradle, which the mother has hid in a deep furrow of

the field in which she is at work. The two edges of the furrow hide the sides of the cradle, and when the curtain is lifted, the child only sees a little bit of blue sky overhead, with an earthy screen on either side.

As to the garden itself, as I have said before, it scarcely deserves the name. It could only have been reckoned as such in those primitive days of which Homer wrote, when he described the humble enclosure and seven fields of the patriarch Laertes. Eight straight beds of vegetables cut in long lines, bordered by fruit trees and separated by turf and yellow sand; at the end of these alleys, to the north, eight gnarled trunks of trees, which formed a kind of shady trellis with a wooden bench; another summer house (rather smaller) at the bottom of the garden, festooned with trailing vine-leaves, and shaded by two big cherry trees—that was absolutely all! I forgot one thing by the bye; not a murmuring stream, or even a well with green and moss-covered stones; there is not a drop of water on this arid soil! but a little reservoir, hollowed out of the rock by my father, to catch the rain-water; and round this

green and stagnant pool a dozen sycamores and plane trees, which give a little shade to that end of the garden, and which, in the autumn, scatter their great yellow leaves over the paths and the basin with its oily deposit. Yes, this was all. And yet this sufficed for many, many years for the enjoyment and repose of a father and mother and eight children! This still suffices to nourish a whole host of affectionate remembrances and regrets! This is the Eden of our childhood, to which our thoughts fly back when we seek to picture again to ourselves those halcyon hours which are granted to man but once in his life, when everything is touched with the roseate colours of happiness and hope. There is not a tree, nor a fruit, nor a bit of moss in this garden which does not seem to form a part of our very selves! This little bit of ground seemed to us immense. Nay, does it not seem so still, peopled as it is with so many thoughts and memories? The poor little wooden gate in the fence, half-broken then as now, to which we would rush when lessons were over with joyous cries; the beds of fresh lettuces

and mustard and cress which had been divided off into little gardens for each one of us, children, and which we were allowed to cultivate ourselves; the little mound where our father used to sit with his dogs when he came home from shooting; the straight walk where our mother used to pace up and down, repeating the rosary in a low voice, her thoughts full of God, while her eyes wandered from time to time in search of us; the little bit of soft turf to the north, always shady on hot days; the low wall, to the south, which was always warm in winter, where we sat with our books in the sun, like the standard fruit trees; the three lilacs, the two nut trees; the beautiful strawberries peeping from under their bright green leaves, the golden-drop plums, the Charmontelle pears, the peaches, found in the morning all sticky with their golden gum and wet with dew; and later on, the summer house, in which each of us, and I, in particular, would come and read our favourite books in peace; and the vivid remembrance of the manifold and confused impressions derived from those pages, and still more the recollection of the intimate conversa-

tions—the good long talks held here and there —in this or that walk of the little garden; and then the place where we wished one another 'good-bye' before long partings, and that where we met again on our return; or again, the spots which recall the sad or painful episodes which occur in every family, where we saw our father's brow darken, or our mother crying, even while she forgave us, we, hiding our faces in her gown; or sadder still, when a messenger of evil tidings came to announce the death of a child, or one dear to her, when we saw her lift her hands and eyes with resignation and love to heaven — Ah! all these images, these impressions, these groups, these faces, these joys and tendernesses and sorrows, still people for us this little garden as they did so long ago in those bright days which are past; and now, recollecting the lives so marred since the time when those trees and that soil were the boundaries of our existence, we would that the world had begun and ended for us within those narrow walls!

The old garden is still unchanged. A little moss begins to carpet the trunks of some of

the trees, and the borders of roses and pinks have somewhat encroached on the paths, and catch our feet in their long trailing branches. The nightingales sing as before on the hot summer nights in the deserted wood below. The three cedars which my mother planted are flourishing. The sun, as before, tinges the edges of the clouds towards its setting. There is the same calm, the same silence, only interrupted now and then by the tolling of the angelus bell, or by the monotonous sound of the flail as it falls on the threshing-floor of the neighbouring barn. But wild flowers and briars, and great purple mallows, spring up unchecked among the roses. The ivy grows thicker than ever on the old walls, and creeps nearer and nearer to the now closed windows of my dear mother's room; and when I come back and forget myself for a moment in thoughts of the past, I am only recalled to the present by the steps of the old vinedresser, who was formerly our gardener, and who comes from time to time to revisit his plants, as I revisit the scenes of my youth, my past sorrows, and my vanished joys."

I will insert at the end of this book the verses in which I described these scenes, and which I wrote at a time when a long absence from home rendered such images more misty, even if more dear.

Let us resume my mother's MS.

'June 16, 1801.

'I was so tired yesterday with our expedition to St. Point, half on foot and half on donkeys, for the roads otherwise are impracticable, that I have not had the courage to write an account of our journey. It was a very pleasant one to the children, especially from its novelty. In the evening I took them to church, and prayed God to bless us all. I thanked him for having given us this property on which my husband had not reckoned. The house is in ruins; the walls are bare; the coats of arms and the marble chimney-pieces are all broken by the peasants who took possession of it in 1789—those sad days of pillage and rapine! There is nothing to flatter one's pride; but that is so much the better. I have always had too much.

'Everything smiles upon me—my home, my relations, my friends, my neighbours, the peasants at my door, who look upon me as their providence! I am too happy; sometimes the thought frightens me—What is sweetest does not last in this world. I must strive to enjoy my happiness without clinging to it too much, if it be only from gratitude to the Divine Dispenser of all things; and be ready to face the days of sadness and adversity which He may reserve for me hereafter.'

XXIV.

'My sister-in-law, whom I love very much, Mademoiselle de Lamartine, invited us to dinner to-day at the Château de Mónceau, where she lives with my husband's eldest brother, M. de Lamartine, the head of the family. Neither one nor the other chose to marry—both were disappointed in their love affairs. M. de Lamartine, who, before the Revolution, was heir to the whole fortune of the family, loved Madlle. de St. Huruge, who, however, was not considered sufficiently rich for him. He preferred to remain a bachelor

rather than marry anybody else. Now Madlle. de St. Huruge is too old to think of marriage. She is the sister of the famous St. Huruge, so notorious as a demagogue of the Tribune during the troubles in Paris in those terrible days of October, and on that sad 20th of June. He was a man, like Mirabeau, who threw himself with perfect frenzy into the revolutionary struggle. He was not a bad man—he was even generous—he called himself a Royalist; but he was often quite out of his mind, and in a kind of delirium. I fancy it was his bad reputation, and the unfortunate notoriety attached to his name, which prevented my brother-in-law's marrying Madlle. de St. Huruge. She is good, gentle, pious, and interesting. On her features you see traces of great beauty, though veiled by sadness. She and my brother-in-law meet every evening at Mâcon, in the old family drawing-room, and preserve the most pure and devoted friendship for each other. M. de Lamartine is a man of the greatest merit, very well informed, even learned in all natural sciences, showing great talent as a writer, and much esteemed and

consulted by political parties on all sides; he is the most eminent man in the country. His bad health alone prevents his accepting the nomination of deputy to the States General. He would have been returned to Parliament by the Republicans themselves if he had not been afraid of the excesses into which the demagogues might lead him.

'After some months of imprisonment as an aristocrat, he was allowed to go back to his estates, and now lives at the Château of Monceau, in the summer, with his sister.. This good and tender sister has devoted herself entirely to God and to her brother. She was made to make a man happy. She is as gentle as she is sweet-tempered, and all her goodness shines out in her face. In the family it was believed that she had a great affection for M. de Marigny, before the Revolution—an affection which was fully returned. This gentleman was a distinguished poet and musician, and a most fascinating person. He was also a neighbour and near relation of the family. M. de Marigny emigrated in 1791. His goods were confiscated and sold, and he

died just after his return in a hospital at Mâcon in 1799. Since his death, Madlle. de Lamartine will not hear of any other marriage, and there is a sad expression in her face. Although she remains in the world, it is said that she has secretly made her religious vows as a Tertiary. She has united her fortune, which is considerable, to that of her brother, and employs it entirely in good works. The care and management of the house, meditation, and prayer fill up her day. She is a saint; but a saint without any show or asceticism; one whom it does one good to see! She loves me very much, and I feel that I am the better for each day we spend together.'

XXV.

'June 19, 1801.

'I have thought a great deal to-day about the dangers of idle reading. I believe, if I were to do what is right, I should deny it to myself altogether. It would be a sacrifice which could not be otherwise than pleasing to God, for it is one of the most dangerous pleasures in the world. Besides, when my

mind is full of these exciting and interesting books, I feel that more solid and useful reading wearies me. And yet I must read serious things to become fit to teach my children. I think I have at last made up my mind to give up all such light reading, and especially novels, for their sake.

'I received yesterday a long letter from my mother from Germany. She does not say where she is. I believe she is still with Madlle. d'Orleans, and that she is occupied with the arrangements for that Princess's marriage. May God protect her in all her journeys and misfortunes!'

(To understand this passage in my mother's journal, I must explain that Madame des Roys, her mother, was under-governess to the children of the Duke of Orleans, before the time when Madame de Genlis was named governess of these same children. After the death of the Duke of Orleans (Égalité), and the dispersion of the family out of France, Madame des Roys, my grandmother (the rival of Madame de Genlis), who was tenderly attached to Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans,

(daughter of the Duke of Penthièvre), had been sent from France into Spain, where this Princess, widow of Philippe Égalité, had taken refuge, with the consent of the Convention. Madame de Genlis, of whom the Duchess of Orleans had conceived grave suspicions, had been sent away, and Madame des Roys had been charged to go and fetch Madlle. d'Orleans, her old pupil, who was in a Swiss or German convent, and take her back to her mother. This Princess, then very young, but already very distinguished in character, heart, and mind, became afterwards the famous Madame Adelaide, and exercised great political influence under the reign of Louis Philippe, who was her brother and her friend. My mother fancied that there was then a question of marriage pending for the Princess; but the only object of Madame des Roys' journey really was, to remove her from the influence of Madame de Genlis, and of the political clique which was then called the 'Orleans Party,' by bringing her back to her mother in Spain. The Duchess of Orleans (widow of Philippe Égalité) had for a long

time been compelled to separate her cause from that of her husband's party. She had never shared in their revolutionary acts, nor in the ambitious and dynastic intrigues of this same party with the army of Dumouriez, into which Madame des Genlis was striving to drag her pupil. She set an example of candour, goodness, and virtue in the very temple of intrigue. The Court of Spain saw in her the double victim of her husband's follies, and of the excesses of the Revolution.)

XXVI.

'St. Point, July 3, 1801.

'We established ourselves yesterday here. I found it very difficult to settle all my little family affairs. I was very tired. In the evening I went to pray in the little church which adjoins the garden. I saw, in crossing the churchyard, that they were digging a grave, which made me make reflections on the vanity of this poor life for which we give ourselves so much trouble! The funeral followed. The daughter of the man who had just died fainted away on hearing the gravel

fall on her poor father's coffin. I made her smell some salts, and then brought her into the house, where I forced her to take a drop of wine and a biscuit, which revived her. But what, I think, composed her more than anything else was, that I cried with her, and that my children, seeing me cry, cried too. This poor fellow was thus mourned by those who did not even know his name. His daughter said things which went to my very heart. There is nothing which touches poor people so much as seeing their troubles understood and shared in by those whom they consider above them. Towards evening we accompanied the poor girl to her home at the edge of the wood, where her little brothers were waiting for her on the threshold of the door, and asking her, "When their father was coming back?" I was very glad that my children should understand by this chance episode, what the separations are which death entails, and which they must, alas! themselves feel some day. It does not answer to put life before one's children under false colours. They must see it as God has made it, with

its sweetnesses and its bitternesses. To learn to suffer, is not that to learn to live ?'

XXVII.

'July 3, 1801.

'I went to-day to see an old lady of eighty, who has a small pension, and a little apartment for life at the top of the château. Her only companion is a hen, which is as devoted to her as the tamest animal could be. Her name is Madlle. Félicité. In spite of her wrinkled face and her white hairs, whiter than the wool on her distaff, one sees that she must have been very beautiful. I made my husband promise that he would not turn her out, whatever might be the little inconveniences that she may cause us. One should not transplant old trees. At her age, a room is one's world. The spot which we have inhabited becomes a part of ourselves. She is waited upon by an old servant named Jeannette, now the wife of the churchwarden, who had lived all her life in the castle, and knows the history of most of its previous possessors. This also makes me reflect a good

deal. One day they will talk about me as *having been* here, and that day is perhaps not very far off! Oh, my God! where shall I then be? Grant that it may be in one of Thy eternal mansions.

'After dinner with the children (which is at one o'clock), I read and worked; and then read a meditation on the Gospel to my servants. Now I am going to end the day in the church, of which the dim light will help me to piety and recollection. In this way I hope to fill up the void caused by the absence of my husband. We shall then go, the children and I, and walk in the cool of the evening, by the edge of the great wood. This is a life of great sweetness and calm, and free from many moral and physical sorrows. Oh, my God! I do not deserve such happiness. I thank Thee a thousand times. Do not permit my over-anxiety of mind to prevent my enjoying the real blessings which Thou hast bestowed upon me. When I was a child I did not imagine that one could live happily but at Court, in a palace like the Palais Royal, or like the park at St. Cloud, where I

lived with my mother. Now, oh, my God! I will always strive to be happy in whatever place Thy will may appoint for me. When I compare this house, badly furnished, it is true, but healthy and large, with plenty of sun and shade, and in a pastoral valley like that of Switzerland, where I lived during the first years of my marriage; when I compare it, I say, with those smoky houses in the town, or those cottages near us, so badly thatched, letting in all the wind and rain; and when I think how many other women there are, far more hard working, and more resigned than I, who have neither house nor cabin to shelter themselves, or their poor little children, am I not still too highly favoured and unworthy of Thy bounty?'

XXVIII.

'July 9, St. Point.

'To-day I am in a state of great sadness and discouragement, although I have really no cause for it, except the continued absence of my husband, for outwardly my position is unchanged. But it only needs a change of wind to trouble us in this miserable world;

and in a sensitive nature like mine emotions quickly vary. To-day everything seems dark to me. At first I was quite delighted with this place; and now it seems as if I could not bear a few weeks of bad weather here!

'I have just been reading Madame de Genlis' work on education; it pleased me much more than I expected. I found in it a great many wise suggestions, of which I hope to profit for the sake of my own children. All this has more and more convinced me, that one ought never to be influenced by one's prejudices. On the strength of other people's words, I have spoken ill of this book and its author, without knowing anything of one or the other! I was wrong to do this, and am heartily sorry for it.'

XXIX.

'July 10.

'Yesterday they came to tell me of a poor woman in the village, who was positively sinking for want of food, and who had a number of little children. I went directly to see her, but found several people in the cottage. This made me shy, and from

a kind of false shame, and fearing to appear ostentatious in my charity, I did not dare give her anything. I thought I would send her what she wanted from the house. When I got home I found it was too late to send any of the servants such a great distance. In fact, the poor woman, perhaps, passed all the night without food, as well as her children! I reproached myself justly and severely. This morning very early I set off and took her everything I could think of; but it was no longer the same thing! Why is one as much ashamed to do what is right as if it were something wrong? This is a weakness into which I resolve henceforth not to fall again.'

XXX.

'July 14.

'This day has passed quietly. I trust all will be well with those whom I love, and who are so far away. I thought a great deal of my husband, who must be to-day at Lyons with Alphonse. I hope he has arranged for him to leave that school. Ah! how much I would give to be there with them! I pray

God to bless them both. This morning I received a letter from my mother which gave me very great joy. She is still in Germany; who is it that takes care of her there? I wish I knew. This morning I read in Madame de Genlis a description of the life of the monks of La Trappe, which struck me very much. What surprised me most is that they are not unhappy in the midst of such great privations, though they welcome with joy the approach of death. This has convinced me more and more, that it is not earthly pleasures which make men happy; but peace of conscience and the fulfilment of duty, however painful. One is always happier at the end of the day when one has spent it, as far as one could, in the service of God and of one's neighbour; because one feels oneself living more in conformity with God's will. If we were once thoroughly convinced of this truth, "that all things work together for good to those who love God," we should be less restless, and allow ourselves to be led gently by circumstances in the path which He has appointed for us. Since I realised this truth more fully, I am

infinitely happier. There was a time when I wanted every one to yield to me, and when I wished all things to be subject to my will; but then I used to torment myself from morning till night! I have often realised since, that if I had had my will, it would have been a great misfortune to me. Now that I am willing to abandon myself entirely to the decrees of Infinite Wisdom, I feel at peace exteriorly and interiorly. May God be praised for this and all His mercies! He alone is Infinite Wisdom, and He reigneth above all things, for ever. Amen.'

XXXI.

'July 19.

'My husband is arrived. We have been with the children to take a long walk to the top of the high range of mountains which separates our deep valley from the broad valley of the Saône. These hills, which rise and fall like clay moulded by the hand of the Great Potter, are covered with pines, beech, and broom, of which the yellow flowers gild the sides of the slopes; while purple heather

and patches of bright green grass fill up the little dells on which flocks of sheep are feeding, which, from these heights, do not look bigger than fowls! Here and there, bright little cascades are formed by the rushing mountain streams, whose course may be traced by the brighter green of the beech, chesnuts, and willows which grow on their banks. Everything speaks of the greatness and goodness of the Creator. The soul of man, when not darkened by the storms and passions of life, reflects all these beautiful objects as in a mirror.

'From the top of these Hills one sees Mont Blanc and all the chain of the Alps, covered with eternal snow. My husband was on foot with the keeper; the children and I on donkeys. The old churchwarden, to whom the donkeys belong, and who knows every path in the mountains, acted as our guide. It took us three hours to reach the summit, although, looking from my window, I thought to climb up there easily in half an hour! But distances in mountain countries are as deceptive as the flight of time in human life. Only, one is de-

ceived in a contrary sense. The one seems close at hand, though in reality far off; whereas time seems often so long, and it is so short! Sometimes it appears to us endless; yet it is already past!

'We spent the whole day with the children, strolling about or sitting on the grass, looking at the glorious views on all sides. Two whole provinces were stretched out, as it were, at our feet: the Mâconnais, with its little white villages clustered here and there, from the steeples of which at mid-day rose the Angelus bell; La Bresse, with its endless meadows, looking like the Dutch pictures which my eldest brother (who was secretary of Embassy in Holland) used to send us as children; and, to crown the whole, Mont Blanc, which appeared first white, then rose colour, then violet, according to the sun; like a piece of iron which becomes white or red as it passes through the fire of the blacksmith's forge. We all dined together on the grass; and then, mounting again on our donkeys, came home by another path through a nut-wood.

'The striking of the donkeys' hoofs on the rock, the cries of the children, the whistling of the blackbirds as they flew, the crack of my husband's rifle as he and the keeper shot coveys of red-legged partridges, and the chatter of our guide and the donkey-boys, made our little party so noisy that a stranger might have imagined that the mountain was being invaded by a troop of marauders. The poor little shepherds, who were guarding their goats and sheep on the mountain sides, looked quite scared and ran away. We came to one little dell, where we found the flocks deserted, save by two black dogs, who barked at us furiously as we passed. A little further on, we came upon a fire between two big stones in the middle of the path, and by the side of this rustic hearth were a pair of children's sabots. The boys, in fact, were not far off; but, frightened at the unaccustomed sound of the guns and of our voices, they had run away and hidden themselves in the heather without having had time to put their shoes on their little bare feet. My little girls and I determined to give them a pleasant surprise.

We stopped by the fire, which was half out, and put in each little pair of sabots a half-franc and some sugar-plums which the children had saved from luncheon. And then we went on again, thinking of the joy of these poor little fellows when, reassured by the silence, they should return to the fireplace to fetch their shoes. They were sure to think that the fairies (who are said to haunt these mountains) had left these presents for them. Our steep scramble down the ravine was enlivened by the hearty laugh of the children at the thought of the fright of the boys, and then their delight and surprise at finding their shoes, and the story they would tell their mother at night of the "good people" who had left them such treasures. What we expected came true. The little shepherds, finding their sabots full of money and sugar-plums, gave all the credit to the fairies. But their fathers and mothers were not so easily taken in; and with that delicacy of feeling which one so often finds in the peasants, especially in mountainous countries, determined to give us a surprise in return, so as

to show how they had appreciated our trifling kindness. The next morning, when the servants opened the front door, they found on the doorstep four little reed baskets full of nuts, cream cheeses, and little pats of butter, made in the shape of sabots! The children, who had thus left their little presents, had run away, so as to give us a like surprise and a like mystery. The delicate way in which this anonymous offering was made delighted us all. We did not know to which of the cottages these poor children belonged, whose gratitude had run the risk of making a mistake rather than not find its legitimate expression. Such acts of mutual kindness between rich and poor are what I most wish the children to see and learn, as they must touch their hearts.'

XXXII.

'Milly, July 22.

'Here we are back again at Milly, our usual home. I am very sorry to be so far away from church, but I must try to pray as often and with as much fervour as I can in my own room and in the garden, although it cannot

be the same thing as to feel oneself in presence of the Blessed Sacrament.'

(Here follow some purely domestic details till the 30th of July, when she resumes her journal.)

'We left Milly yesterday morning at ten o'clock to go and spend the day at Changrenon with M. and Madame de Rambuteau, our neighbours. M. A. de Rambuteau, their son, is a fine young man, with a very noble, high-bred look. They say that he is likely to turn out a very distinguished man. Madlle. de Rambuteau (who was afterwards so celebrated for her beauty in the Court of Buonaparte under the name of Madame de Mesgrigny) is the most charming person possible. I wish that my girls, by the time they are as old as she is, could learn such perfect manners. She plays beautifully on the piano, and is accompanied by a master, who is called Bréval, and is a wonderful musician. He passes his summers at Changrenon, and goes back in the winter to Paris. Nothing has been neglected in this young girl's education, and she does credit to her masters; only, I think, they make her

work too hard, for she is grown very pale and thin.

'On my return, I found a long letter from my sister (Madame de Vaux) giving me good news, in every sense, of my dear Alphonse. She tells me, also, that one of the farmers on her property of Vaux, who had bought his farm during the Revolution with certain bills of credit, was conscience-stricken at not having given the real value for it; he voluntarily came forward and paid 20,000 francs more, and likewise promised an additional rent in wine for thirty years. Such an instance of honourable conscientiousness is very rare, and ought to be had in remembrance.'

XXXIII.

'July 31.

'This has been a terrible day for our little property; the storms have been terrific, and the hail has come down with full force on our poor vines. It is all the worse because they were loaded with grapes. My heart was indeed full when I thought of the possible failure of the crop, and the suffering it would

entail on our poor people as well as on ourselves. This shows me how much I still involuntarily cling to the things of this earth. I behave as if happiness were my right, and the smallest adversity knocks me down at once. Oh, my God! grant that I may at last realise the vanity of all things here below, so that I may value only those which are eternal!'

XXXIV.

'August 10, 1801.

'I am again with child, which makes me very unhappy and my husband too. How in the world are we to bring up such a large family on such small means? But I try to resign myself to the inevitable. Who knows? Perhaps this child will be a greater blessing to us than all the others.'

(This child turned out to be a girl, who was called Sophia, and who married the Count de Ligonnès, a nobleman of La Lozère, who had by her a numerous family, as distinguished for their goodness as for their beauty. Father, mother, and children are still living at

Mende, and are looked up to with affectionate respect by the whole country.

Here follows a description of a variety of home events, with medical notes on different sick cases among the poor people, whom she had learnt to doctor by studying the medical books of M. Tissot. Various little circumstances which pass unnoticed in a town, but are great events in the country, are also recorded; such, for instance, as the following):

'August 26, 1801.

'Yesterday our favourite old pedlar called. He is a sort of harbinger of autumn, like the departing swallows. His arrival was a joyful event for the children. Afterwards I went to see and dress the wounds of a poor little child whose mother had let it fall into some boiling water whilst she was busy washing. I hope to save it, but am not sure.'

XXXV.

'September 2.

'May the holy and adorable will of God be done! With those words I closed my journal and with the same I reopen it to-day.

We have had another fearful storm, and the hail has entirely ruined our crops. We hoped to have had a glorious vintage, and now we shall scarcely have enough for our poor vine-dressers.. I am sick at heart with anxiety and fear. This terrible misfortune will entail many privations. We must retrench in every possible way. Good-bye to all our pleasant plans for passing the winter at Mâcon and having masters for the girls! We shall probably have to sell our horses and the char-à-banc too! Well, it is God's will: this thought ought to suffice to console us for everything. The fewer my pleasures are in this world, the less I shall cling to it, and the more I shall think of that eternal home to which we are so rapidly hastening. Nothing hardens the heart so much as prosperity, and very often what is bitterest to poor human nature is in reality a great grace from God, who thus detaches us from earthly treasures to fix our hopes on those which are eternal and imperishable. To-day I am calmer and better able to make these reflections: yesterday the blow was too sudden and unexpected. My

husband had far more courage than I, although he suffered most at the moment. He said to me, "If neither you nor the children are taken from me, I shall not repine; my riches are centred in you." Then he came and prayed quietly with me, while the hail pattered against the windows, breaking the branches and the glass; while the noise of the storm was mingled with the sobs of the peasants, who were watching the scene of devastation from the courtyard.

'This evening I began to read a journey in the Pyrenees by M. Dusaux. It interested me very much, because it was written in 1788, and I was to have gone there with my mother that very year. We only got as far as Limoges, and there, to my great regret, we had to stop, on account of the snow, and spent all the winter with a relation, the Comte des Roys, who has a property about six leagues from Limoges. It was arranged that we were to start again for Barèges in the spring; but then the Duchess of Orleans recalled my mother to Paris, where the Revolution was on the point of breaking

out, which made her wish for my mother's presence and advice. I regretted bitterly the failure of this little plan, for I looked forward so much to seeing the Pyrenees and the sea, which I have never yet done. Those whose lot is cast in such scenery must, I should think, have a grander idea of God's majesty and a far keener realisation of His infinite power. Well, after all, what does it signify? One day we shall see all this from above, and far greater wonders besides. When I have spent whole nights watching the glorious firmament, and wearying myself in counting the stars, and fancying that each is a separate world, and that millions of these worlds are bigger than our little earth or sun, I am consoled at not having seen more spots on earth and sea like those we call Alps and Pyrenees and Oceans! All is so small when viewed in the light of infinity!

'To-day is the anniversary of my first communion twenty-four years ago. How quickly one's life passes! How is it, then, that we do not give our minds more constantly and more seriously to that which is to come after?

This life is after all but a dream. My God! Give me a happy waking, and then let the dream be as painful as Thou wilt!'

XXXVI.

'September 11.

'My brother-in-law and his sister, Madlle. de Lamartine, have come to spend the day with us. They brought me news of my poor brother and of Alphonse, who has gained two prizes, so that his masters are much pleased with him. I own to some feeling of pride about that boy. I beg pardon for this, for certainly I have not contributed towards anything good in that little soul.

'This evening Madame de Lavernette came to visit us on her return from Lyons, where she had seen Alphonse. His masters told her that the boy was doing all he could, and that he could do all he would. His father conceals his pride in him, but he is in reality as proud of him as I am. Will it last? What a wide difference there is between a man and a boy! The child writes by Mde. de Lavernette that he is longing to come

home. I am afraid, when he does come, I shall find him looking terribly pale and thin. That's the way mothers spoil even their pleasures!'

XXXVII.

'September 18.

'I have come to Mâcon to wait for Alphonse. My heart beats so quickly when I think that, in a few hours, I shall see that dear old boy again! . . . At last, here he is! . . . He came very late. Whilst I was waiting, I went to pray in the little oratory of he Ladies Focard—nuns who have been turned out of their cloister, and who have made a convent of their own house. I wanted a little quiet moment for recollection at the foot of the altar to calm my anxiety and agitation. Alphonse did not arrive till late at night, and I found him so grown, so well, and so handsome! Also he does not seem to have lost any of those early feelings of piety which I tried so hard to instil into him; and that was my great fear.'

XXXVIII.

'September 23.

'We had a large family party at dinner to-day, including M. Blondel, an old friend. We talked a great deal about Alphonse at dinner—perhaps too much. We read an extract from some lectures he had been attending, and his father showed us a little bit of his composition, which was very good. Everyone praised and admired him, and my mother's pride was only too much flattered.'

(The following days are filled with domestic details chiefly relating to the pecuniary difficulties of our home.)

XXXIX.

'October 7, 1801.

'I was intending to go on with this journal yesterday, but I was too tired. I had such a vivid recollection of what I felt on that very day twelve years ago! How quickly time runs on! It was the famous *sixth of October* —that day so disastrous to the Royal Family at Versailles. I was at Chatou with my

mother. We were returning from Mesnil and intended going on to Paris; but we could not get any horses, and were obliged to sleep at Chatou, at the house of an old friend of my mother's, Madame Duperron. It was very lucky for us, for Paris was in a fearful state, and all the carriages were being stopped and searched. Even with Madame Duperron we were not without anxiety, as her son-in-law was on duty with his regiment at Versailles. His poor wife and children trembled for his safety. We stayed for four days at Chatou, and then started with Made. de Montbriand (a chanoinesse like myself) for Lyons, without daring to return to Paris. It was this journey which decided my marriage with the Chevalier Lamartine, whom I loved, and who had loved me ever since we had met in the chapter of Salles, at the house of his sister, the Countess de Lamartine de Villars, who was a great friend of mine. Being compelled to stop for twenty-four hours at Mâcon to have our carriage mended, my husband's family were most kind and civil to us. The Chevalier de Lamartine was then with his regiment, but I spent the

whole day at his own home in Mâcon. Fortunately for me, I made a favourable impression on his father and mother, and on his brothers and sisters, so that the question of my marriage, which had been in abeyance for some time, was renewed. I like to remember every little particular of that week in October, which became the source of all my future happiness; and to renew my thankfulness to God who led me step by step to Mâcon, where He willed that our mutual love, which had met with so much opposition, should at last be gratified, and my happiness, with husband and children, secured.'

XL.

(The 8th of October and several succeeding days contain nothing sufficiently interesting to transcribe here.)

'October 11.

'I have received a long letter from my mother. She is returning from the German waters, where she has been with Madlle. d'Orleans, who is much better. My mother is always with this young Princess; but she tells

me that it is doubtful whether she will escort her to Spain, as she is horribly afraid of the sea, and the Princess will not go through France.

'My brother-in-law, M. de Lamartine, took me yesterday to the village of Champagne, near the Château of Peronne, which also belongs to the family. He made me go and look at a very pretty house he had lately built there, and which he intends for one of our children. It seems that all these properties are to belong to them and be divided amongst them after the death of their uncles and aunts. They have certainly fair prospects as far as this world is concerned; but what does that matter? May God make them rich in goodness and piety! He knows that this is what I really covet most for them.

'I make Alphonse read every morning a chapter of a good German book written by a priest, and proving how a religious spirit emanates from everything in nature. I am satisfied with his intelligence and progress, but I often find fault with him for his impatience, especially with his sisters. I am afraid, unless he takes pains to cure himself,

that he will become too proud and imperious in character.'

XLI.

'November 9, 1801.

'There is a great gap in my journal. The quantity of work I have had on hand and the illness of one of my children, have altogether prevented my writing. To-day I am at Lyons, where I have brought back Alphonse to school. I am very sad at parting with him. This morning I went to mass in the boys' chapel, and sought out his long fair hair among all those little heads. O dear! how terrible it is to uproot a little plant like that from its native soil, and plunge it among strangers who are so often bad and mercenary! I was quite sick at heart on taking leave of him. Neither the view of those beautiful mountains of the Saône, or the still more picturesque islands of Barbe and De Fourvières, bathed in the evening light, or the bustle of the town, when I came down from the hill of La Croix Rousse into Lyons, could divert my mind for one moment from the thought of the poor little creature whom I had left sobbing in that prison. I felt like

23127

Abraham when he looked back on Hagar and her son, abandoned to the chances and perils of the desert. And yet the desert is less dangerous than the crowd into which the inexorable laws of society force a mother to throw her innocent child. I spent the rest of the day with my sister, Made. de Vaux, who has now a house in Lyons, and we comforted ourselves by crying together. She also has many troubles of her own; and, lately, has had great reverses of fortune.

'I am going to stay here a week, to be able to see my poor Alphonse now and then, who cannot get accustomed to his prison any more than I at being separated from him!

'The Abbè de Lamartine, who has a property near Dijon, where he generally lives, is going to lend us for the winter his little house in the Rue des Ursulines at Mâcon. It is next door to the great family house, occupied by my brother-in-law, M. de Lamartine and his sisters, and looks out on a very dark and gloomy side-street. But there is a communication with the big house by an inside passage. I am looking forward with

great pleasure to spending the winter in the town, for the sake of giving masters to the children.'

(The *1st of January*, 1802, is commemorated in my mother's journal by touching expressions of gratitude to God for the blessings received in the year that was passed, and by earnest resolutions to profit by the fresh year granted to her by making more vigorous efforts to arrive at religious perfection.)

XLII.

'January 7, 1802.

'Buonaparte has just passed by here on his way to Lyons, to preside at a meeting of the *Cisalpins*. No one knows what will be the result of this business.

'I have just been writing to my mother. She is at Leghorn, where she is going, after all, to embark for Spain with Madlle. d'Orleans. May God give them a safe voyage, and to my poor mother a less suffering one than she anticipates! She writes to entreat me to come and meet her, and says all sorts of nice things about Madlle. d'Orleans. M. de Pierre-

clos came to see us to-day. His name has just been erased from the list of Émigrés, so that he can return home. He has been at Lyons, and brought good news of Alphonse, who went to see the review of the troops by Buonaparte on the Place de Bellecour, at Lyons. His masters took him there as a reward for good conduct, together with twelve of their best scholars. I was very glad to hear of this little distinction, as it is a good sign.'

(During the winter of 1802 her journal is filled with thoughts and religious impressions —sometimes cold, sometimes fervent. It is, in fact, the record of a soul unsparing in its self-examination, and determined to struggle against all the weaknesses of poor human nature.)

XLIII.

(On the 17th of April our mother came back to her country home, when she received letters from Spain.)

'I have at last received a letter to-day from my dearest mother from Barcelona. She has

gone through a great deal since she wrote last: among other things, a fearful storm in crossing from Leghorn to Port Rosas, which lasted for three days and nights. After they had disembarked at Rosas, their vessel continued on her course, but has never since been heard of! There had been no news of her or of the remaining passengers on board when my mother wrote. I feel as if I could never thank God enough for His care of her during this fearful voyage. Her escape seems to have been almost miraculous. The meeting between Made. la Duchesse d'Orleans and her daughter was most touching: they had been separated by the Revolution for eleven years. I do not know when my mother will return to France.'

XLIV.

'September 5, 1802.

'I have left this journal unwritten for a long time, as on the 28th of August I was brought to bed of another little girl. My sister, who came to me for my confinement, overwhelmed me with love and care. I am

able to nurse my baby as usual, which is a great blessing.

'We have just established daily family prayers in our little household. It is a touching and useful custom if one wishes one's home to be, as the Holy Scriptures call it, a "household of faith" and brotherhood. I feel as if nothing should so bind together masters and servants as this community of prayer and humiliation before God, in Whose sight all are equal, whether high or low. I look upon it as most essential for the heads of a family, who are thus reminded of their equality as Christians with those who, in this world's parlance, may be termed their inferiors. And it enables the children to realise better the thought of our Father in heaven, Whom they cannot see, but whose representative on earth is the parent who thus leads them daily, with reverent confidence and love, to the throne of grace.'

'September 7.'

'My mother is actually on her road from Spain to Paris!'

XLV.

'St. Point, October 2.

'I am at St. Point since yesterday evening, with Alphonse, Cécile, and Eugénie. This little expedition has given the greatest delight to the children. Alphonse rode a mule, and was in the seventh heaven of happiness. We amused ourselves by gathering a great crop of grapes, enough to make two whole barrels of wine. My husband has just bought a pretty little property adjoining Milly, belonging to M. Aubel; his sister, Made. de Villars, having lent him 50,000 francs for the purchase. If our little income thus increases with our children, I can only thank God and pray that we may make a good and holy use of it. I had brought with me a copy of St. Augustine's "Confessions." It is a very favourite book of mine, and I was glad to see Alphonse taking it up this morning and reading it with great interest.'

XLVI.

'October 28.

'I have brought back my boy sadly enough to Lyons. My mother, who is at her little property of Rieux, near Montmirail, and who has found all her affairs in the greatest state of disorder and ruin on her return, writes me letters upon letters to persuade me to go and stay with her a little bit at Rieux, which she says would be such a comfort to her. If I go, I shall go alone, without children or servants, so as not to increase the expense of the journey. Besides, would it not be wrong of me to indulge myself in such comforts and luxuries, while my poor mother and so many other persons far more worthy than I am, are suffering such cruel privations from the ruin this terrible Revolution has entailed?

'I have put my baby out to nurse with a very pretty little peasant at Milly, so as to be free for this great journey. I feel now quite strong and well, and am as active as a young girl of fifteen. Yesterday I went on foot to hear mass at the village of Bussières, which

is a long way off from Milly. The weather was miserable and the road very bad; but I felt such a spring in me as if I minded nothing—a sure proof of returning health. It reminded me of my youth and of a famous walk I had one day with my father and my sister De Rochemont, from the Château of St. Cloud to that of Meudon, when it appeared to me as if I really was walking on air, and scarcely touched the ground on which I trod

'The dear old aunt who brought me up from childhood is dead. I am troubled about her poor old maid, Jacqueline, who was like a second mother to me, and who will, I fear, find herself utterly desolate, even if not reduced to great poverty. I should like so very much to bring her home to live with me. But the family won't hear of it; and my husband fears, with good reason, to affront his brothers and sisters, on whom the future of our children mainly depends. He proposed to me to give Jacqueline secretly a little pension, and to put her with some respectable people in Lyons, where she would be kindly looked after; but I would rather have paid my

debt of gratitude personally to this poor soul. Had I been in her place, and she in mine, nothing would have prevented her receiving me into her house, and even into her own bed!'

XLVII.

'December 17, 1802.

'Alphonse has escaped from school with two of his schoolfellows, the young M. Veydels, whom he persuaded to accompany him. They were caught six leagues from Lyons. The discipline and confinement of this college had for a long time become insupportable to him. I am very much distressed at this event. His great independence of character frightens me, for I am afraid I have spoiled him. They had great difficulty in making him write a penitent letter to his father.

'I have been reading again St. Augustine's Confessions, which are very appropriate just now. I want to imitate, as far as I can, the example of St. Monica, and to pray like her continually for my children.'

XLVIII.

'January 14, 1803.

'I arrived yesterday at Rieux, after a very long and painful journey, having spent some days at Paris. From Coulommiers to Rieux, I was obliged to go on horseback, on a farmer's horse led by one of his children. It was freezingly cold; the north wind and snow made me suffer as much as I should have done in Siberia! But it was all forgotten when I saw my dearest mother. Never shall I forget our mutual joy. She was very much overcome when she kissed me. That moment made me forget all my troubles. Here I am once more in this dear old home of Rieux, where I used to pass the summer months of my happy childhood. Ah! if one could but find in a place the same people who formerly made its brightness and its joy! My poor mother is terribly changed by the troubles, exiles, journeys, and miseries of all kinds which she has borne for so many years both on her own account and for my brothers and sisters.

'In the evening she tells me heaps of interesting things, either relating to our own family, or to the journeys which she has made by sea and land with the Princesses. I cannot help admiring more and more every day her courage, her energy, her wisdom under difficult and trying circumstances, and the wonderful insight which experience has given her into the characters of people, and the best way of leading them. It is very sad for her at her age to be placed in so embarrassing a position as regards money, and one so precarious besides. She is very much oldened in face, but is always gay and bright in conversation. What would I not give to be rich and independent enough to help her substantially to replace the fortune she has lost. But, alas! I have so little in my own power; and that little must be taken from what I can save out of my own household expenses, and those of my children. I want to write down, whilst I am here, the many interesting and remarkable things she has told me. I found out yesterday in talking to her that our family comes from Vivarais, and that a Madlle. des Roys still lives at Montfaucon, where she in-

herits the property of Rieux, as being the oldest existing branch of the family. This property is to come to my mother after her death. I shall be so delighted at any event which may soften for her the evening of her days! She has been actually obliged of late to do without a lady's maid—she who has been used all her life to every kind of luxury! I shall always think of her now when I am disposed to grumble at any little privation in my own lot. Oh, my God! come to her aid, and, after a life of such toil and devotion, brighten her old age!

'To-night she told me a great deal about Madame de la Reynière, wife of the Receiver-General, who is a near relation of hers, and with whom she has always been very intimate. M. d'Orsay is also a relative of ours, and has married a German Princess, a cousin of the King of Prussia. M. d'Orsay, his son, has lately married an Italian Princess, though of less high rank than his own mother. These long and intimate talks by the fireside bring back to my mind such a number of persons whom I knew as a child, and who were then my

mother's intimate friends. Alas! after this terrible revolution, there is scarcely a family that is not ruined or dispersed.

'I am going to write down now a strange anecdote of J. J. Rousseau and the Maréchale de Luxembourg, with whom my mother was very nearly connected.' This lady, who was an old friend of J. J. Rousseau's also, ascertained that the lady with whom he lived was with child, and that she was in an agony lest Rousseau (as he had done three times before) should carry off this baby, and place it in the Foundling Hospital. She sought out another friend of Rousseau's, M. Tronchin of Geneva, and entreated him to bring the baby to her as soon as it was born, as she had decided to bring it up herself. M. Tronchin spoke of the matter to J. J. Rousseau, who appeared to consent, nay, to be even pleased at the proposed arrangement. He told the mother of it also, who was wild with joy. The moment she was brought to bed, the poor woman sent word to Tronchin. He came and saw the child, a beautiful little boy, full of health and life, and agreed with the mother

and the nurse as to the hour the next day when he should come and fetch it. But at midnight, Rousseau, dressed in a dark-coloured cloak, stole into the room of the poor mother, who had her baby in her arms, and, in spite of her cries and protestations, carried him off and left him at the hospital, without any mark or possibility of recognition! "And this is the man of whose tenderness and fine feelings people are so fond of talking!" exclaimed my mother. I replied: "It was the act of a madman, whose addled brain had made him forget his heart." Alas! how often is genius but a species of delirium when it does not rest on a religious foundation. Tasso and Rousseau are proofs of this. Let us be thankful for the gift of genius in our children, should God grant it to them; but let us wish, far more ardently for them, wisdom and good sense. The cold is intense. The snow is falling in thick flakes. All the country is covered with it as far as eye can see. I read Tacitus to my mother, and other old books, for which she has a marked predilection She acquired this taste, I fancy, in the society of

the philosophers and men of letters who formerly filled the drawing-rooms of the Palais Royal.

'This morning a priest, who was an old friend of my mother's, the Abbé Chauveau, a man of great ability and exemplary piety, said mass for us. There was a baptism afterwards which touched me very much. In fact, baptisms always do, because they recall those of my own little ones. Then I went to see a poor woman who has just been confined and was very ill, without any of the comforts which so greatly softened the like suffering to myself. Seeing her utter misery and the want of everything needful around her, I made a vow to spare neither fatigue, nor good food, nor firing, nor money, if I have any, to help such of the poor peasants around me as may be in that condition. How much keener one's sympathy is for sufferings one has gone through oneself, or which one sees with one's own eyes! Indirect charity may be good; but personal charity, by which I mean, charity given by oneself as from one heart to another, is far more efficacious. My God! remind me

of these good resolutions. No more idleness or forgetfulness or frivolity when such a duty is concerned! This evening I again read Tacitus out loud. This historian pleases me far more than the rest. He touches and edifies me as I go on, whereas the others only instruct me. My father's library here is rich in history, and such reading disgusts one, luckily, of novels and romances, which are, after all, but a waste of time.

'I wrote a few words to-day in my mother's letter to Madlle. d'Orleans, in Spain, as she wished me to do so. She has given me a lovely portrait of this Princess, which Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans had had painted expressly for her, as a token of her gratitude for all the care my mother had taken of the young Princess during that terrible voyage to Rosas.

'Yesterday, the day being finer, my mother and I went to Montmirail and its neighbourhood to visit some old family friends. Among the rest, we went to see Madlle. de Champagne, an old maid, who, although of high rank, lives in a humble little cottage with one servant,

and a little garden which she cultivates herself. She showed us her cows, which she fetches herself from the fields. She likewise superintends her own harvest, and, in spite of manifold privations, seems to be quite contented.

'At Montmirail every one sang the praises of M. and Madame de Larochefoucauld-Doudeauville, who have a beautiful château there, where they spend an immense deal in charity. They have just lost their daughter, and have only one son left, who, they say, is a charming young man of eighteen. They told us a thousand little traits of his kindness to the poor people in the neighbourhood.' (This man is now the Duke of Larochefoucauld.)

'My poor brother arrived yesterday. He has had a reconciliation with my mother, and all is forgiven and forgotten. He appears very reasonable now. His idea is to go to England, where my mother will give him letters of recommendation to the Orleans Princes. I hope they will be kind to him and help him on.'

XLIX.

(Our mother came back to Milly in the spring. She resumed her journal by expressing her great joy at returning to her husband and children and to her home. She then made a journey to Lyons to find out the real cause of her boy's escape from school. She sympathised warmly with his repugnance at the system in operation there, and resolved to use all her influence to obtain permission for him to exchange this college for one where the authorities would be of a more religious stamp.)

'I had some commissions to do at Lyons,' she continues; 'among the rest, to get some bed furniture. I bought some stuff at two francs a yard. It is not, certainly, very pretty; but what does that signify? I am quite determined not to indulge in any luxury. I will not spend anything I can help upon myself, so as to have the power of doing some little good towards those who need everything. Alas! it is little enough I can do, even with the strictest economy.

'My brother writes me word that he has got a very good place in England. But, if war be declared, what will become of him? People talk a great deal about it just now. I have just been reading a charming book, M. de Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme.* I do not know if am a good judge, but the style delights me.'

(Three months of domestic details follow, mingled with self-examination and contrition for what she fancied were faults and imperfections in her conduct.)

L.

'Belley, October 23, 1803.

'After a great deal of difficulty and many discussions, I at last obtained the permission of my husband and his brothers to take Alphonse away from that school at Lyons, and place him with the Jesuits at their college at Belley, on the frontiers of Savoy. I took him there myself, and was much pleased with all I saw. But yesterday, when I had to give him over to his ecclesiastical superiors, I cried

too much to write, and I am afraid I spent half the night in tears!'

LI.

'October 27, 1803.

'I went this morning to look at my boy through the railings of the playground, and then saw him among the other students in the chapel at mass. He told me he was very much pleased with his reception there, and liked both his masters and school-fellows. Afterwards I went to pay a visit to the Abbé de Montuzet, who had been the prior of my old chapter of *chanoinesses* at Salles. In the evening I started again on my way home to Mâcon. As I passed before the courtyard of the Jesuit college, I saw all the boys at play, and their joyous voices sounded very pleasantly. Fortunately Alphonse did not come to the gate to see the carriage pass, for he would have cried again, and I also. It is much better not to let boys give way too much, or be too soft, when they have such a hard life before them till they become men. I could not resist crying quietly and silently

behind my veil the greater part of the day. Yet I am much happier to have him where he is than at Lyons.'

LII.

'October 29.

'I have found at Mâcon very sad letters from my poor mother. War is declared with England, which has compelled my brother to leave London at the very moment when he had found the employment he most wished for. What is worse is, that he becomes anew a burden on my poor mother, who is already so distressed for money that she is obliged to sell the greater part of the property at Rieux, to pay the debts contracted for her journeys in Germany and Spain.

'I have better news of my sister, and I have been fortunate enough to be able to help her in her difficulties, and to send her a thousand florins from Madame de Villars, my sister-in-law, who has lent them to her without asking a farthing of interest. Madame de Villars, parsimonious for herself, and keeping strictly to her vow of poverty (from which the Revolution

and the Pope had released her on the destruction of her convent), spends all her fortune (which is considerable) in helping her family and such of her old companions and friends as have fallen into poverty. She has pensioned off five or six of the *chanoinesses* de Salles, besides innumerable other charities. The world laughs at her for her economy and apparent stinginess; but God and the poor praise and bless her, and can never do so enough.'

LIII.

'March 6, 1804.

'By depriving myself of everything I possibly could, I have sent twenty pounds to my poor brother. This is the anniversary of my wedding-day. It is now fourteen years ago since I had the happiness of marrying a man after God's own heart. I knew how loving and good he was; but, till I lived with him, I did not know half his perfection. His only fault is an excessive sensitiveness as to what is honourable and upright—a sensitiveness which takes alarm at the least shadow of indelicacy. But this is

surely a virtue rather than a defect. He only lives for me and for the children. Yet he has many and heavy cares to enable him to bring up so large a family on so small an income. Ah! it must be my care to soothe and cheer him, and to look to Providence for our support. I trust in God. This confidence has never yet failed me. It is perhaps my only merit, for in other things I am sadly deficient.'

LIV.

'March 16, 1804.

'In the cemetery at Bussières, which is our parish church, the body of a woman, in perfect preservation, was discovered this morning. She had been buried for a great many years, and must have been very young when she died. No one knows who she was. She had a wedding-ring on her finger, and a rosary in her hand. She seemed as if asleep, and only waiting for the cry: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!"

'I like to fancy that she was one of the unknown saints to whom God had granted the

extraordinary grace of preserving her from the common lot of corruption and decay.'

LV.

'March 20.

'Alas! I had a great sorrow on Wednesday. I found on my table a letter from my sister addressed to my husband. In my impatience I broke the seal at once, as he had always given me leave to open his letters. What did I find, oh, my God! but the news of the sudden and tragical death of my poor brother! My mother's whole anxiety was to carve out a future for him. How will she bear this terrible shock? Oh, merciful Lord! do Thou, in Thy loving-kindness, have pity upon him! Forgive him the faults of his youth, and open to him the gates of everlasting life! Ever since I had this dreadful news, I have never ceased to pray and weep, in church and out, for that dear soul. My sister writes me word that his death was one of perfect resignation and calm, and that he died as a Christian should die. May he rest in peace! It is only in the next world that we can hope for a solution of the mysteries in this.

'These last few days have been spent in pious exercises and devotions consequent on the jubilee. My soul finds no rest but in God. Four of my children accompanied me. There were a number of young girls dressed in white, singing hymns, several Penitential Orders in their habits, and a great many young men walking in procession, with singular devotion and recollection. I was very much touched and edified. I hope that God will look down with the eyes of His loving kindness on us all, and have mercy upon us.

'I have had fresh trouble on my poor mother's account. It was believed in Paris that my poor brother was implicated in a conspiracy against Buonaparte. He had neither the will nor the means to conspire against him. The mistake arose from a similarity of name with another person, and also from his having lately arrived from England. They made a domiciliary visit to my sister's house to examine all his papers; but nothing whatever was found save literary essays.'

LVI.

'March 24.

'I was reading this morning a new novel, by Madame de Genlis, on Madlle. de Vallière. It is an historical romance and very well written, though I think it a dangerous one for young people. As for me, it only made me make some salutary reflections on the vanity of all things here below, and the insufficiency of the greatest worldly honours and position to give happiness, especially to a soul which feels that nothing earthly can satisfy its needs. It is in vain that we strive to find comfort elsewhere. Everything speaks to us of God, and on Him alone can we rest with confidence and peace, in the midst of the agitations and troubles of this mortal life. Yes, my God! by Thy grace, I feel every day the need to be altogether united to Thee—to be Thine alone. To sacrifice all, so that I may find all in Thee. Nothing else, oh, my God! is worthy of my endeavours, and I may give utterance to that proud thought without sin. My soul is an emanation from Thine, and can find neither peace nor happiness but in reuniting itself to

its first principle and its final end. Grant, oh, my God! that for this I may continually strive, and that nothing may henceforth have the power of separating me from Thee!

'I sinned to-day against charity by treating a young girl rather roughly, who came to ask me to do her a little service. I was very sorry for it directly after, and tried to make amends by doing all in my power to serve her. I also fell into a sin of pride yesterday. Forgive me, O Lord! Fifty times a day I ought to renew this petition.'

LVII.

'March 24, 1804.

'I begin to discover several white hairs among my black ones. What a warning for eternity! Time flies. What have I done with my youth? I ought now to work double tides, not only for my own salvation, but for the happiness of those around me.'

LVIII.

'June 17, 1804, at Milly.

'I was happy and at peace: I had received a letter from my sister three days ago, giving

me a better account of my mother. I thought she was getting quite well. She even spoke of settling herself at Montmirail; but yesterday my husband received another letter from my sister, which fills me with the deepest anxiety. She writes that in the last two days my mother's illness had assumed the gravest character, and that she is in great danger. This sad news came at the very moment when Madlle. de Monceau and my children had prepared a bouquet for my fête. It is needless to add how completely this letter spoilt my pleasure. I was to have dined to-day at Monceau, but I could not make up my mind to go; and so sent the children with my husband.'

LIX.

'May God have mercy on the soul of my beloved mother! Her great charity, her universal kindness, and the thousand other virtues she had practised all her life, ought to reassure her now. Alas! her worldly position was a most painful one. She had had nothing for many years but anxieties and sorrows and

very little consolation. She has sunk under her troubles far more than from her age. The agonising thought that I shall see her no more on earth, fills my heart with grief to the exclusion of all other reflections.

'My grandmother lived to ninety-two, and I hoped that my mother would have done the same. She has made a will in favour of my sister, but which she had not had time to sign. My conscience would never let me rest if these her wishes, although not legally expressed, remained unfulfilled. The family make difficulties as usual. Fortunately, my husband is of my way of thinking.

'I wrote the fatal news this morning to Madlle. d'Orleans, and asked her to break it as tenderly as possible to her mother, Madame la Duchesse. My husband has made the act of renunciation for me, which I so earnestly desired, in favour of my sister. She is going to purchase Rieux, where we were so happy as children. I am afraid that the filial piety which induces her to sacrifice all to carry out our mother's wishes, will add to her financial embarrassments, which are already very great.'

LX.

'September 14, 1804.

'I am come to Belley to fetch Alphonse for the holidays. I found him in the courtyard on my arrival, and he was as much moved as I. He became so pale all of a sudden that I thought he was going to faint. Ah! how we did kiss each other when we were alone together.

'To-morrow he is to be the orator in a species of public exhibition, held in the Jesuit College every year, of all their best scholars. I am as nervous about it as if it were I that had to make the speech.'

(A long interval of silence follows.)

LXI.

'February 5, 1805.

'I went to-day to see a clothing of one of the hospital nuns at the Mâcon hospital. In the sermon preached on the occasion, she was told that she was embracing for ever a life of penance and mortification—in token of which

a crown of thorns was put upon her head. I could not but admire her spirit of devotion and self-abnegation; but I felt that the state of a mother of a family, if she fulfils her duties rightly, may be one of equal perfection. I do not think that we remember enough that, when a woman marries, she takes, as it were, a vow of poverty, as her fortune is henceforth placed under the control of her husband, and she can only spend it as he chooses. Again, she takes the vow of obedience and of chastity, as henceforth she may not seek to please the eyes of any other man. She is also bound to exercise charity towards her husband, her children, and her servants; to nurse and tend them in sickness and in health; and to teach and help them, as far as may be, by example and good advice. I feel then that I ought not to envy the lot of the hospital nuns, that my obligations and duties are as binding, and quite as difficult as theirs; perhaps even more so, as they have every help which religion can give, whereas I am surrounded with distractions. These thoughts have done me good. I have renewed my vows before God,

and I pray for the help of His grace that I may faithfully keep them.'

LXII.

'Palm Sunday, 1805.

'We are in a great bustle here to-day, for the Emperor is to arrive with all his court. My sister is still with me, but we are rather pressed for room, because Monsignor de Pradt is to take up his abode in our house. He is Bishop of Poictiers and chaplain to the Emperor.' (Afterwards this ecclesiastic was made Archbishop of Malines, and was noted for his courtier-like devotion then, and his base ingratitude towards Napoleon after his downfall.) 'I would rather have him than anyone else of the Emperor's suite. But the whole place is in a state of excitement and agitation.'

LXIII.

'Lyons, April 26, 1805.

'I have come here with my sister to see the Pope. I saw him first walking along a terrace which adjoins the garden of the archbishop's palace where he is lodged.

Yesterday I assisted at the Holy Father's mass at the church of St. John. I had a good place and saw the ceremony very well; but I had the greatest difficulty in getting through the crowd to the steps of the throne to kiss his foot. At last, however, I had that happiness. This venerable old man has the face of a real saint, and so have several of the Roman prelates who accompany him, especially his confessor.'

LXIV.

'May 12, 1805.

'Our fortune is increased, and so my husband has been able to purchase the house of M. d'Osenay, a large and roomy mansion with a nice garden. We are very busy furnishing, and hope to settle ourselves in it this summer.

'My husband gives me 600 francs a month for housekeeping and for paying Alphonse's board; but then all our meat, vegetables, wine, and dairy produce come from our two farms, so that it is more than enough. I am always overwhelmed when I think of the tender providence of God towards us; and I

hope I am always prepared to relinquish or hold these His gifts as He shall judge best.

'My own rooms are finished; they are really too pretty. I feel I am far too well off in this world. In spite of the occasional trials which God has sent me, I have far more happiness and interior peace than I deserve. All my trust is in the Divine and Supreme Dispenser of all things. I have lately been reading a little treatise on "Confidence in God," which has done me a great deal of good. This simple and sweet abandoning of oneself into the hands of God, is it not the greatest of all earthly comforts?'

LXV.

'August 20, 1805.

'This pretty little apartment, in which I settled myself yesterday, is probably the last change I shall ever make in this world; I mean, in all probability, I shall die here.' (In fact, she did die in these very rooms.) Alphonse came home yesterday. I am afraid I shall have some trouble with this child. He is very difficult to manage and to guide.

And now his sisters are getting such great girls too! Nevertheless, when I see myself surrounded by my six beautiful children, I cannot help feeling very pleased and proud. I only beg for light and knowledge to guide them, so as rightly to accomplish my heavy task towards them.'

LXVI.

'November 9, 1805.

'We have come to spend a week at the Château de Monceau, at the house of my eldest brother, M. de Lamartine. We found here my two sisters-in-law, Madlle. de Lamartine, the good angel of the family, and Madame de Villars, who has been our earthly Providence. There are also two or three very agreeable men staying in the house; among the rest M. Blondel, the Abbé Bourdon, and Commander de Jôlin; old people, it is true, but whose conversation is always full of instructive and amusing anecdotes. Our life here is very pleasant. The weather is beautiful, so that we are out almost all day, and in the evening we tell stories. But I have not been very well. I cannot help feeling that I am

growing old; that my complexion is spoiled, and my face gets red and flushed. But if this is a humiliation to me, on the other hand it may be a great grace; for I am thereby more detached from the world, and less likely to please or be attractive to others. I have nothing to do but to accept it; but I own that it vexes me now and then when I look in the glass. I should like to have been spared from the common lot, and to have preserved the beauty of youth even while growing old. I often forget that I am thirty-eight, and the reminder is not agreeable. Oh, my God! make me realise the nothingness of all things here below, and have pity on my weakness.'

LXVII.

'Milly, July 6, 1806.

'Here I am once more in retreat, and I own I feel more at peace with myself. I like the world, but I am glad to return to the rest and recollection which this place affords. I go expeditions with the girls on donkeys to see the ruins and curiosities of the neighbourhood. We drink milk fresh from the cow, and go

and visit the peasants, who all know us and love us, because I strive to help them with their children, or in sickness — than which nothing gives me more pleasure. One loves to be loved; and it is so easy to win the affection of these simple country people by a little care and thought for them. Thus the time slips away.'

LXVIII.

'September 7.

'My husband is just come back from his brother's, the Abbé Lamartine's, near Dijon, where he has spent part of the summer. We are now at St. Point, which is the home I like best, in spite of the ruinous state of the house. I want to make a real retreat here: from time to time one needs solitude and silence, so that one's heart may be right towards God.'

LXIX.

'Sunday, September 21, 1806.

'These last days have been virtually days of retreat though not such as I had imagined. We have had no one but the curate to dine every day; the weather has been bad, but I

have never felt bored. The day is never long enough for all I have to do, and my strength is exhausted before half my tasks are over.

'I go to mass every morning, at seven, with my children. Then we breakfast. Afterwards, household duties—then read the Bible with the girls and do our lessons—French history, grammar, &c.—working at the same time. This brings us to dinner almost before we are aware of it. After dinner the children play for an hour or more. And then we work again, and have some pleasant book read out loud by turns till tea-time; after which they learn poetry, or other lessons, by heart for the next day. Then we go again to say our rosary, or evening prayers, at church; after which we walk in the garden or the woods till dark. In the evening I generally play at chess with my husband, while the children amuse themselves in other ways, or learn some of La Fontaine's fables by heart. Whenever we are living quietly with the children anywhere, this is our daily rule; only making a difference in our hours according to the seasons. My great object is to keep them

continually occupied and interested, and to give them a real spirit of practical piety. I had a long letter from Alphonse yesterday; he seems well in health, and is going on very satisfactorily.'

LXX.

'Milly, September 25.

'My husband has just had the news of the bankruptcy of his wine merchant, who owes us twenty-one thousand francs. It is a terrible blow. But my husband says nothing, because the poor man, who is from Nuits, is thoroughly honest; it was his misfortune, not his fault. He came himself to announce the suspension of all payments, and called together his creditors to divide everything he had left. He has reserved nothing for himself. One cannot do otherwise than admire such conduct, and pity one who has thus ruined us involuntarily. But what we are to do this year I cannot tell. We reckoned on this sum, and now it is all gone! May God's will be done. I cannot help admiring my husband in these reverses of fortune. He suffers for

me and the children; but otherwise he steels himself marvellously against all the casualties of life.

'Alphonse was to return from college a few days ago: I went on the 17th to meet him at Mâcon. He arrived alone late in the evening. I found him much better than I expected; he is a head taller than I am, rather pale and thin, but not otherwise than strong. He is come back with the highest character. His masters speak most highly of his abilities; and he has come home loaded with prizes and crowns for the best speeches in Latin and French, and the best poetical compositions in both languages. But, in spite of it all, he is very modest. What pleases me most, however, is that he is really piously inclined now, and in a way which he never was before. May God bless him and preserve to him those gifts of grace which alone can make him happy. I could not help rushing off to church, after I had given him a good hug, to thank God with all my heart for his safe return, and for the many blessings he has granted me in him.

'I introduced Alphonse with some pride to all his father's family at Moncean. The only thing wanting in him is a greater gentleness and courtesy of manner. I am afraid of disgusting him if I scold him about it too much, and, on the other hand, I equally fear to spoil him by not telling him of his faults. Oh, dear! how difficult it is to form a man! Both my husband and I are much troubled to know what to do with him. He has set his heart on the army, which is his father's profession; but this terrible war with Russia swallows up such thousands of young men! And then the license of a camp is so fatal to their innocence! May God enlighten us to decide for the best!'

LXXI.

(Our mother returned to town on the 25th of December, 1806, and writes in her journal on the 2nd of January, 1807.)

'This day warns me that I am hurrying fast towards my eternal home. The virtues which I mean to strive particularly to acquire this year are a greater gentleness and humility.

It seems to me that these are the qualities most needed in this world. I will try and speak as little as possible about myself; bear with patience all contradictions or humiliations; spend as little as possible on my dress; never show temper when I have to find fault with children or servants; never allow anger any place in my heart; to strive also never to say any little thing which may give pain to my neighbour, whether present or absent. These are my resolutions. They are enough for one year; indeed it will be well spent if I am only faithful to them.'

LXXII.

(After this, there is nothing remarkable in the journal till the month of September, when I find the following:)

'I am once more in the enjoyment of my solitude at Milly. I am alone with my children and my books, and my only society is Madame de Sévigné. I had a long walk this evening on the mountain of Craz, which is behind the house above our vineyards. I was quite alone. I like nothing better than

to wander thus in the summer evenings far away. I like this season and a long walk, with no companion save my own thoughts, which are as wide as the horizon, for they are filled with God. Nature fills me with a thousand different reflections, some joyous, some sad. I know not how to express what I feel, unless it be a secret union with my soul and the infinite works of the Creator. When I turn to come home, and I see from the top of the mountain the little light in my children's rooms, I thank and bless Providence, who has given me this hidden, quiet nest in which to rear and shelter them. I walk home with a silent prayer in my heart—a song of praise unheard by man. But Thou, O Lord! hearest it. Thou who hearest the buzzing of the insects in the heather which I tread under my feet, Thou knowest I am thankful!'

(Her journal during this year, 1807, is filled with minute examinations of a conscience which was tender even to scrupulosity; and with the anxieties of a mother for a son, whose morals and faith were equally in danger from the cold blast of an unbelieving

world. On her return to town for the winter of 1808, she resumes her pen, but it hangs heavily. The year 1808 and part of 1809 are altogether wanting. What was passing in her family was this:

There was at Mâcon a young girl of great personal attractions and cultivation, who had inspired in her son that species of innocent affection which is the precursor of love. But a certain disparity of age and position made both families apprehend the result of those inclinations. It was, therefore, decided to send the young man to Italy for a year's travel. His family judged rightly that the wind of the Alps would blow away these fancies.

Here we will resume my mother's MS. There is hardly a syllable of this prudent design. She dwells simply on the happiness of her son, which was her one thought. She knew his passion for foreign travel, and rightly judged that he would be the better for seeing all those great things, the dreamy longing for which was making him spend his youth in sadness and inaction.)

LXXIII.

'Sunday, November 25, 1809.

'I am reading the memoirs of Mde. Roland, whose husband was minister at the beginning of the Revolution, and who afterwards was herself guillôtined. She was a woman of great ability and wit, and of a noble spirit; and would have been eminent for virtue also if in her youth she had not fallen into that detestable philosophy which was then the fashion, and which brought about her ruin and ours; for it was these very opinions which brought her to the scaffold. Her memoirs are well written, and have interested me very much; but only by skipping all those parts where there is a question of religion, of which she speaks very ill. I did not choose that my son should read these memoirs, although he wished it very much; and I held my ground. I know that he can get at any kind of book now without my knowledge; but, at any rate, I will not have it on my conscience that I put this one in his way. I think that young men and women

are often allowed to read all sorts of books when they come to a certain age, on the plea that there is no harm in them. I believe that this is very dangerous. Faith may be shaken at any age, and it is always a sin to allow one's mind to dwell on the opinions of free-thinkers. One ends by thinking all kinds of reading allowable; and it is by depriving oneself of those books in which, however fascinating and agreeable, a real danger lies, that we can practise what the Bible calls "circumcision of the spirit."

'M. de Sigorgne has just died at Mâcon at ninety years of age. He was a very learned man, and had been in correspondence with J. J. Rousseau on subjects of religion and philosophy. He was the friend of M. de Lamartine, my brother-in-law, and used, out of good nature, to give lessons in mathematics to Alphonse. He is one of those relics of the past which one grieves to see disappear. We love youth, but we venerate old age more.

'Alphonse is gone to pass the winter at Lyons to rub off his country ways a little, and accustom himself to the great world. He is

gone with M. de Balathier, an excellent young man. I am delighted at this intimacy, as it will keep him out of the way of bad companions. I am here with my five daughters, who are easy enough to bring up. Our life is that of a convent: in the morning, mass and pious reading, then a study of ancient and modern history, which interests me as much as it does the children; after dinner we do needlework; at sunset we say the Rosary together; and in the evening I read them a play of Molière's, or something amusing. I do not think there is any harm in that, as I pass over all doubtful or dangerous passages; at night, we have family prayers, to which I add aloud a little meditation, generally out of my own head. The days pass with incredible swiftness in this way. God grant it may be with profit to our souls! If I were free, I feel I should like to devote my life entirely to God. But we always wish for something different from that which God has appointed for us. Would it not be better to desire only the fulfilment of His holy will?

'My husband is at Mâcon, at a general

council of the department, presided over by M. Denon. M. Denon is a man of a certain age, but young in mind and brilliant in conversation. He came and told us all about his Egyptian campaign with the Emperor, and described his sensations in battle and under fire, quite admirably. He has overwhelmed my husband with civilities, and is very anxious to induce him to come into Parliament. But my husband says he would have to choose between his conscience and his promotion; and that he would rather sacrifice every worldly advantage than lose interior peace. I respect his motives too much to urge him to take a different course; although my pride (under the disguise of wishing for an increase of income for my children) made me wish for him to have these honours thrust upon him.'

LXXIV.

'January 7, 1810.

'I am very anxious about Alphonse, and alarmed at the state of idleness and inaction in which his family compel him, for the present, to remain. It is specially for him that I must

now plead for the Divine aid! His passions are beginning to develop themselves, and I fear that his youth will be a stormy one: he is restless and melancholy, and does not seem to know what he really wants. Ah! if he would but seek for the only good which is capable of satisfying the human heart! They blame us for letting him go to Lyons, but they do not know our reasons. We must let people talk, I suppose; and do what we feel to be right. He seems sick of acquaintances, and more inclined to study. I hope that, with the many resources of a great city, he will find more interest and occupation than in a little country town, where idleness gives endless occasions of sin. Besides that, I am very anxious that he should not be too much seen or known here, as, owing to his height and appearance, he might attract the attention of the Emperor's agents, who would compel him to serve in the army, and refuse any substitute whom we might purchase for him.'

LXXV.

'Milly, April 11, 1810.

'I came here yesterday to sleep with Cecilia and Eugénie: the weather was delightful. I wanted to enjoy a really beautiful spring morning, and it was certainly delicious. As soon as I was up, I went into the garden, and spent nearly three hours reading, thinking, praying, and thanking God for all His mercies towards me—of which I certainly ought to make a better use. It was very mild; the fruit-trees were laden with blossoms which quite scented the air. The other trees are bursting into leaf, the birds are beginning to sing, the insects to buzz and hum—everything in nature is awakening to a new and fresh life. I am inexpressibly happy when I can be quiet in the country at this delicious season. Unfortunately we must go back to town, and I don't know for how long! But I must strive to wish only for that which pleases God; and my sole desire is to do my duty in whatever way He may appoint.

'On Sunday I had M. Morel at dinner. He

is a very distinguished artist, a good architect, a clever draughtsman, and a firstrate musician. The greater part of what are called "English gardens" in the neighbourhood of Paris were made from his designs. He came into this country to lay one out for M. de Rambuteau. I happened to meet him, when he told me that he had been an intimate friend of my father's, which gave me an interest in him at once. I asked him to dinner, in consequence; and was very much pleased to make his acquaintance. Unfortunately he is very old; but though eighty-four or eighty-five, he is in full possession of all his faculties, which I attribute to his great sobriety: he never drinks wine or any spirituous liquors. This has confirmed me in my determination never to drink wine either.

'M. de Rambuteau has been here for some days. He was present at the Emperor's marriage, and I hope to see him to-morrow. I should like to hear some details of a ceremony which everyone says was so magnificent. There were fireworks and illuminations which surpassed any that had ever been seen. I

could not help reflecting, however, on the folly of men whose great delight seems to be to hang a lot of little lamps one after the other. One may well exclaim: "Vanity of vanities!" A little brighter light, a good deal of noise, and still more smoke—and this is what is called glory! Is it worth while to covet it so much for one's boy?'

LXXVI.

'Milly, April 27, 1811.

'I have passed a delicious day all alone at Milly. The weather was glorious, and I was out all day. I read the first volume of a very interesting book, the *Itinéraire de Paris à Jerusalem*, by M. de Châteaubriand. It is a very able work.

'I went yesterday to Changrenon, to pay a visit to Madame de Rambuteau. Her father, M. de Narbonne, her husband, and her sister were staying there. I was curious to see M. de Narbonne again, as he was formerly very intimate with my eldest brother, who was ambassador in Holland and a very distinguished man. To my great joy he began directly to

talk about him. He is a very agreeable man and in great favour with the Emperor, being even spoken of as the new minister for foreign affairs. He was very kind to Alphonse, and invited him to go and stay with him when he returned to Paris; but there would perhaps be more danger to him in this than advantage. I do not seek earthly grandeur or position for my children; but only an honest employment, which, after having conduced to their happiness in this world, should lead them to eternal felicity in the next.'

LXXVII.

'October 11, 1811.

'Alphonse writes me an enthusiastic letter from Rome as to the wonders of that Eternal City; I would give a great deal to be there with him, but I am too poor. His uncles and aunts defray the expenses of his journey; and gave us yesterday 72*l.* for him on account. If he is economical, he can, with 100*l.*, very easily spend his winter at Rome and at Naples. But then he is very young and very imaginative to be left entirely to himself in that way

in a far distant country! I was so anxious for his departure, and now I am only longing for his return! Morning and night and fifty times a day, I recommend him to the Divine protection. What a misfortune it is to have a son without any distinct occupation! In spite of the repugnance of the family to letting him serve Buonaparte, I think we ought to have thought of him and of his real interests, and not of our private opinions or political antipathies. I hope his friend M. Aymon de Virieu will go and join him; he is an older and steadier man, and would be useful to him in many ways.'

(This was at the moment when I left Rome for Naples, where I led that romantic and poetical life described in *Graziella*, and which at the bottom, as I have said before, was true. See the first volume of the *Confidences*.)

LXXVIII.

(There is a great gap here in the journal, which is only resumed after the return of her son from his travels, on the 24th of July, 1812.)

'St. Point.

'I have been here for a fortnight, having arrived on the 7th of July. My husband and Cecilia had preceded me by one day. I was afraid of being very much bored at first, and I did not feel that pleasure which I generally experience when I first settle in the country: nevertheless, when once regularly installed, I found myself as happy as ever. My solitary walks, the daily work, and reading with my children, the care of my poor and sick—all have resumed their old interest for me, and my enjoyment of everything has returned, though I am not entitled to such an amount of happiness. God only knows how little I deserve it! But this peace has been troubled by a domestic event.

LXXIX.

'Montculot, August 10, 1812.

'Here I am in the beautiful home of my brother-in-law, L'Abbé de Lamartine, at Montculot, in the midst of glorious woods, and gardens, and fountains, and in a house which is like an old abbey. I ought to be thoroughly satisfied here; but I am not. The cares and

anxieties of a mother haunt me even here. How much I have to reproach myself for! I am so extreme in everything; worldly when in the world, austere when in retreat; passing events and present things act too strongly upon my imagination. I love peace and calm of mind, and when they are disturbed I suffer. . . I strive to offer up all my troubles to God, and to pray and read a good deal; the shortness of life strikes me more than ever; and the necessity of preparing for eternity. I must remember what I once wrote down: "that I was resolved not to consider this life anything but a purgatory, so that whatever sorrows God might send me, I should find them light in comparison of what I have deserved." What makes me anxious and fearful is, the establishment of my six children, and all the difficulties I foresee on their account. But my over-anxiety on this head is wrong, because I have so often proved the goodness of God in so many circumstances —a goodness which has never yet failed me; why then should I imagine that it would be wanting to me in that which is the one object and aim of my life?'

LXXX.

'December 17, 1812.

'I came back to-day from Milly, to settle myself in town, and dined on my way at Changrenon, at Madame de Rambuteau's, which I liked very much, because we talked of persons whom I had known so well in Paris in my youth.'

LXXXI.

'January 31, 1813.

'To-morrow the marriage of my eldest girl, Cecilia, is to be announced. She marries a M. de Cessia, a gentleman of Franche-Comté. Cecilia is very young and very beautiful; but she is reasonable and good; and he bears the highest character. At sixteen he was wounded in Condé's army, so that he is still á little lame. He has an old father of eighty-seven; very positive in character; and two unmarried brothers. It is an excellent marriage, and one which I hope and trust will secure the happiness of my daughter.

'Alphonse is at Paris: he was very well received by M. de Pansey, Councillor of State,

and President of the court of Cassation. Alphonse's cousin, Madame de Prè, who lives with her uncle, M. de Pansey, has also been very kind to him. M. de Pansey is an excellent man, but very old. I am quite astonished that at his age, when we must so soon lose all we have loved in this world, he should still be ambitious of power and position.

'I have just been into Alphonse's room to look at his books and burn those which I think bad and injurious for him. I have found among the rest the *Emile* of J. J. Rousseau. I could not resist reading a few passages in it, and I do not reproach myself for doing so, for they were magnificent, and I even mean to copy out some portions of them for myself. It is a thousand pities that such really beautiful writing should be spoiled and poisoned by such extravagant and impious opinions, which are enough to ruin the faith and purity of youth. I shall burn this book and also the *Nouvelle Héloise*, which is still more dangerous from its passionate sentiments, and its perversion of all sense of right and morality. What a misfortune it is when such

talent is thus abused! I do not fear for myself. My faith is sure, and above all danger of temptation—but . . . my boy? . . .

'I have had a great deal of sorrow lately on his account. From Lyons and from Italy, heavy bills have been sent in to his uncles and aunts, for debts incurred by him during his travels. The family, who think I have spoiled him, consider me responsible for these extravagances. They have stormed at and scolded me, and I have shed many bitter tears; for, after all, the faults of one's children are in a great measure one's own. Why was I not more strict with him at first? He was afraid, above everything, of displeasing me. Perhaps, however, had I been more severe with him, he would have loved me less; and then I feared that later, should still graver circumstances arise, the dread of grieving me would have ceased to be a second conscience to him. Everything will be paid by the family. But they have made me pay too for the thoughtless follies of my child, a bitter price, in reproaches and tears.

'He is at Paris. M. de Larnaud, a very

able and distinguished man, and a great friend of my brother-in-law's, lives in the same house. He has written confidentially to warn us that Alphonse's state of health gives him great anxiety; that he has lately developed a passion for gambling, into which he has been led by certain bad companions; that he spends his nights at M. de Livry's, where he might easily lose his whole fortune in a few hours; that he certainly studies and even works hard the greater part of the day; but that, what with work and sitting up half the night at play, his youth and strength are being rapidly undermined. He ended by imploring us to recall him from Paris as soon as possible. In consequence of this letter I started directly for Paris with my second girl, Eugénie, whom I let into my secret. I took out of my husband's desk all the money which he had left there when he went to his brother's in Burgundy. My old friend Madame Paradis, my brother-in-law M. Lamartine, and my sisters-in-law, helped me also; so that I could set off at once, writing to my husband at the same time to tell him

all I was doing, so as to avoid, if possible, a scene of anger and reproaches, which must have ensued had he himself gone to fetch his son. When I got to Paris, I would not go straight to his hotel, for fear of giving him too sudden and too painful a surprise. I own too I was tremblingly afraid, after M. de Larnaud's letter, lest I should find him sadly altered in face, and that I might faint away if I saw him like that without any preparation. So I wrote to M. and Madame de Larnaud to tell them privately that I was arrived, and to ask them to arrange a plan for our meeting. I went to a little hotel not far from theirs in the Rue Richelieu and waited. It was still broad daylight. Oh! how I suffered at not being able to rush off to my boy and kiss him as usual, instead of having to wait till the next day for the visit or answer of M. de Larnaud! I was quite worn out with fatigue and anxiety, and at last threw myself crying on the sofa close to an open window, Julie went and sat on the window-sill to see the carriages going to the opera and to the French theatre. All of a sudden she

cried out: "Mama, come quickly. I think I see Alphonse!" I ran to the window and recognised him directly. He was driving himself in a very smart cab with another young man alongside of him. He looked very gay and bright, which comforted me very much. It was certainly my own boy! All my foolish fears vanished at the sight of him. But I determined not to spoil his evening's amusement; so I went to bed quietly and had a very tolerable night.

'I got up the next morning dying to see him, but dreading what effect my unexpected arrival would have upon him. Also, I feared that he might not be inclined to come home with me, and that the state of his affairs might be much worse than I had anticipated. At last I made up my mind to write to him and tell him frankly the reason of my journey. He came running directly to our hotel, and seemed not only delighted to see me, but very much touched at the step I had taken. His health appeared to me far better than I had expected. He told me that, on my account and for my sake, he would return

to Mâcon; but that no one else would ever have induced him to do so. He only asked for a few days to arrange his affairs. I gave him a week, which I was not at all sorry for, as I wanted to show Paris to Eugénie.'

(Then follows a description of Paris, the Louvre, museums, walks, &c.; also her wish to go to the play, which she resisted from religious scruples.)

'. . . . At twelve o'clock Alphonse took us in his cab to St. Cloud, where I passed so many months of my life as a girl when my mother was with the children of the Duke of Orleans. I was always very happy there; and though I left it at fifteen, and had never seen it since, I have always had a most charming recollection of the whole place. I walked over every part of the park with Alphonse and Eugénie, showing them all the beautiful trees, &c., and the spots where I had had such fun when I was a child. But I should like to have revisited all the dear old rooms; and this was not possible, as the Empress Marie Louise was actually there at that moment.

'I have given all my money to Alphonse to clear his gambling debts, which were heavy, though he had begun by winning largely. I allowed M. and Madame Larnaud to take us to the opera last night, as they declared that, being like an academy of music, it was not forbidden by the Church. I am very glad to have seen an opera at last, for I had all kinds of extravagant ideas about it. I neither felt the astonishment, nor the wild delight, which everyone had told me of beforehand. On the contrary, I was moved by a sort of pity for the world in general, and said to myself: "This then is the acmé of all that human art and human taste can produce: this is what everyone raves about." *Is this all?* It is only a little more exciting than the Marionnettes of our childhood. But to come to facts: devils and fireworks with spirits of wine, drop-scenes and machinery of which one sees the works—that is all. Oh! poor humanity! how narrow-minded it is even in its pleasures! And when I saw heaps of people there, half asleep in their boxes, and bored to death—and yet who went there every night—oh, then,

I really did pity them! But, as I said before, I am very glad to have seen it once, and to understand exactly what this, one of the greatest of this world's amusements, is like. The opera lasted for three hours.

'At last I have succeeded in dragging Alphonse away from that gulf of seductions! I came back by Rieux, my father's property, where I passed a fortnight with my sister. The day before my departure, I had the Holy Sacrifice offered for the repose of the souls of my father and mother, whose tomb is close to the altar. Our reception by my husband and his family was very tender, as far as I was concerned; but very cold as regarded Alphonse. We returned to Milly. He resigns himself very well to our solitude; working, reading, and writing all day in his own room. In the evening, gathered round the fire, we talk over, with the neighbours, the disasters of our army and the misfortunes which Buonaparte's folly have entailed upon France. He has roused all Europe against him. What will become of us if France is invaded by these innumerable foreign

armies, whom he has challenged in Spain, Russia, England, and Germany? My God! how dearly does a people pay for the lust of conquest in their rulers!

'All unmarried men are forced to serve: the taxes are doubled, and they say they are to be still further increased. We have sold our horses from economy.'

LXXXII.

'Mâcon, December 31, 1813.

'Here we are at Mâcon, where we have taken refuge. Every day fresh enemies are announced, and hostile troops have already, they say, passed through Geneva. I have been to Milly to hide some of our wheat as a last resource. What is to become of us all? What a terrible year this has been! and what an accomplishment of Buonaparte's bloody dream! And what hope should we have for the year, which will begin to-morrow, unless. . . .'

(Here she stops; but, in spite of her prudent reserve, one feels that her hopes were for the fall of Buonaparte and the restoration of the Bourbons, the dynasty of her childhood.)

LXXXIII.

'January 2, 1814.

'The enemy is at Besançon and near Lyons; a battle is expected here; but I am not so much frightened as I thought I should be; the presence of danger gives one courage, and braces one up for the worst. I believe and hope in God.

'Everyone is in a terrible state of agitation, and parties run high, which makes society disagreeable enough. I try hard not to say anything contrary to that spirit of peace and charity which ought to characterise every Christian. Sometimes, however, a feeling of human respect gets the better of me, and I am ashamed of the moderate part I have taken, although, even so, I find I am often harshly judged. But I must learn to bear this patiently like all other things. I am overwhelmed with work and expenses, from the number of people in my house, and I have scarcely any money wherewith to meet them; for my journey ruined me, and my husband says we shall be compelled to reduce our establishment.'

(Her journal, until the 10th of March, 1814, is henceforth but a record of the daily manœuvres of the Austrian and French armies, who took and retook all the neighbouring villages one after the other. The battle of the 10th of March, between the troops of Augereau and those of the Austrian general, Bianchi, at the gates of the town, found its echo in the heart of that poor mother, trembling by her fireside for the safety of her children. We continue in her own words.)

'Thursday the 10th there was a fresh fight, 12,000 French against an equal number of Austrians. The battle raged from 7 o'clock in the morning till 4 o'clock in the afternoon, with equal fury on both sides; but at last the French were driven back. The loss was about equal: upwards of 4,000 men killed or wounded. All day long the cannon has never ceased; nor the long line of wounded being carried to the hospital. Oh! it has been a terrible day! . . . .

'After the battle was over, that night and the following day, all the houses were sacked in the villages round Mâcon, and a good many

even in the town itself, especially in the faubourgs of St. Antoine and La Barre. Every kind of excess has been committed — the miserable consequences of war!

'We went to the General (Bianchi), that is, the Curè, several ladies, and I, to implore him to put a stop to these disorders. He received us very civilly, but did not seem to think he had the power to stop the pillage. However, I think since yesterday he has punished some of the marauders. All night we heard the tramp of men on horseback passing under our windows.'

LXXXIV.

'March 17, 1814.

'My poor child Cecilia, who had taken refuge with us from Franche-Comté, was confined on the 9th of March, in the midst of the terrible noise of the cannonade, and the still sadder cries of the wounded in the street! There are always a great many troops here, and we are overwhelmed with mouths to feed. One of the generals is quartered in our house, and we have to keep all his corps, to the

number of twenty-eight, and sometimes more. We shall be absolutely ruined!

'Alphonse is at Milly, where three hundred men are also quartered. Four officers lodge in the house with their horses and servants. Every day new engagements are feared; but I cannot help hoping they will not again fight so near us. The French troops have retired upon Villefranche, while the Austrians remain here or in the neighbourhood.

'Alphonse went on the 10th, with the son of Mon. de Pierreclos, to take part in the great battle of Villefranche. At one moment they were entirely surrounded by an Austrian corps, which moved on under the shelter of a hill. They were saved by the speed of their horses; but their clothes were riddled with balls, and one of their horses was wounded. They managed to retreat to Pierreclos, and from thence to Milly, which the enemy had evacuated.

'Yesterday there was another battle fought near Villefranche, in which the French were again worsted: they say the loss on both sides was very great. A great many wounded

have arrived. Oh, my God! when will Thine anger be appeased? Have mercy upon us, and make our woes to cease.'

LXXXV.

'Sunday, March 20, 1814.

'We have had again two officers and a number of soldiers to lodge and feed, besides the bodyguard and sentinels. At last they are gone, but such visitations cost us a fortune, to say nothing of what they steal.'

LXXXVI.

'Holy Thursday, April 7, 1814.

'Lyons was taken on the 20th, the very day on which I wrote last. General Augereau, who commanded the French troops, left off fighting at the gates of the town; the mayor capitulated; the French army was allowed time to retire, which it did by the gate of La Guillotière; it has marched south. Alas! the French soldiers now are always defeated! There have been no disorders at Lyons. It is very fortunate for us that the city did not hold out longer, for we should have been ruined irretrievably

if the soldiers had been quartered on us many more days. Since that time we have been in comparative peace, and the number of soldiers diminishes daily. Alphonse has been able to come over and see us from Milly and St. Point, where his father sent him to try and save our property, and protect the villages of which he is mayor. He has succeeded admirably, and has made himself beloved by all the peasants, whom his presence reassured and encouraged: there have been no casualties amongst them, thank God!'

LXXXVII.

'Easter Day, April 10.

'At last it seems that our poor dying France is going to be resuscitated, and will emerge from that terrible state of oppression and tyranny under which she has groaned for the last two years! Lyons, Bordeaux, and Paris have hoisted the white cockade. Buonaparte has been declared to have forfeited the throne, which he could no longer defend; and will go to the *Isle of Elba*, which is to be given to him with an income of six million

francs. A courier has just arrived here from Lyons with the white flag. At this moment they are holding a meeting at the Council House, to determine whether they shall give in their adhesion to the Buonapartists, or the Bourbons. My husband and son and son-in-law, M. de Cessia, are gone there. I said all I could to encourage them to do so. The only hope for France lies in her reconciliation with the rest of Europe, under the auspices of her banished kings. Perhaps, however, it is scarcely prudent to declare these sentiments openly just yet. My ardour in the cause has already brought on me some disagreeables, and I have been taxed with want of caution. . . . We know nothing yet for certain as to the progress of events. There was a rumour that Paris had been taken on the 31st of March; but the 10th of April came and went without any official tidings. Insults were feared for those who had pronounced themselves strongly, and in fact some were threatened that evening. . . .

'The next day again passed and nothing fresh from Paris! Public agitation was at its

height, when, about 10 o'clock, a courier arrived bearing the *Senatus consultus* pronouncing the dethronement of the Emperor. The joy of everyone knew no bounds; but it increased towards evening, when a fresh messenger brought the tidings, not only of the actual abdication of Napoleon, but of the return of the Bourbons. It was the hour when everybody was at the public promenade. The weather was glorious, the crowd enormous. People talked to those whom they did not know. Every one met and cried and embraced each other, as if drunk with joy! Then there was an illumination at night, during which time people walked and talked and cried again. The next day the proclamation was made with great solemnity. There was a band of music, and people cried *Vive le Roi!* with all their hearts. A good many members of the council and of the department came to breakfast and dine with us to-day, having been convened at Mâcon by the Governor of Lyons.

'I went to Milly afterwards with my three little ones. I am very glad to be here for a few days' rest, so as to put my ideas in some

sort of order after all the excitement of the last few weeks. To-morrow I shall try and write down some of the thoughts which have struck me upon these great events.'

(One feels, in reading these reflections of hers, written at that time, the amount of hidden feeling which was kindled in that mother's heart against the military despotism of Buonaparte and in favour of the re-establishment of a government which the recollections of childhood had naturally made so sacred in her eyes. This page reads like a lyric of hope after the prostration of despair. A ruler so hated by the women of a great nation could never have been as popular as the historians on his side represent him now. Let us read then this outpouring of my mother's heart.)

'Milly, Friday, April 15.

'Was there ever a creature on whom mercies have been so heaped as I? And was ever anyone so ungrateful? The older I grow the more I seem to be the special object of Thy merciful care and protection. Oh! my God! in the midst

of all the late events, no special sorrow or misfortune has fallen upon me. My children are all round me. My son has been spared to me when other mothers have lost theirs. His health is re-established; in fact, he is grown quite strong. All that I now ask of God for him is, that he should be a good Christian. I crush down, as much as I can, all feelings of ambition for him; all that I ask for, I repeat, is the good of his soul. But even while wishing this with all my heart, I am terribly lukewarm and cold about it. This is a just punishment from God, for having yielded to dissipation, and been too fond of the world and of earthly joys: in that way I have lost the only real ones. Formerly everything seemed to lead my thoughts to God. I was supremely happy in my solitude, and felt an inexpressible charm in raising my thoughts above all earthly things; whereas, now, it requires an effort even to remember my former enthusiasm! Is this the effect of age, which has dulled my senses? Yet my health is excellent, far better than it was in former times; which is another blessing for which I

should thank God. My girls are well too. I see them growing up around me and increasing (I may say so) both in beauty and virtue; for their appearance is very pleasing, and their piety remarkable. Sometimes even I feel myself called upon to check their excess and scruples in devotion. Cecilia and her husband are still with us; their little girl promises to be very pretty, and she gets on very well with her nursing. Our income is improving, and my husband stands high in public estimation. Here are a few of the blessings with which God has filled our cup even to overflowing. How is it that I am not always at His feet to express my gratitude; or at least always occupied in fulfilling my duties, in proclaiming His glory, and in employing for Him the many sweet and happy moments which to others often pass so sadly!

'The downfall of Napoleon is a great example of the justice, patience, and longsuffering of God. "He is patient because He is eternal." I have often thought of that sublime saying of St. Augustine's or of Bossuet's (I forget which). Was it not a temptation to many to

see that Colossus of glory set on a pedestal of iniquity, if one may so express it? All Europe seemed subject to his power. He had only to wish, and to undertake, and all succeeded, even beyond his thoughts. As long as he was the instrument of God, nothing could arrest the course of his victories and of his devastations, or, in fact, of that universal *bouleversement* which he effected all over the face of the earth. Might one not ask: "Of what use is virtue, when vice, carried to the last imaginable pitch, is so brilliantly successful?" Did it not need a supernatural effort not to blaspheme? But wait a moment, O men of little faith! Wait a moment, and you will see this prodigy dissolved, annihilated, destroyed, even more quickly than it was raised! In vain do we seek traces of his passage. He will be buried in what is called "glory," under the ruins of nations, and of mountains of dead bodies, immolated to satisfy the insatiable ambition of one man! The kingdom of St. Louis will be born again in the kingdom of God!

'Let us sing a new song, even a thanks-

giving unto our God, the God of power and of goodness, over all the earth.

'Let all mothers whose children will now be spared to them, sing this song of praise and thanksgiving in their hearts!'

(One can understand how a son, who had the same blood in his veins as this mother, and who had been inspired in Italy with the true spirit of ancient liberty, never could have a moment's sympathy for Napoleon!)

LXXXVIII.

'May 9, 1814.

'My husband has been elected a member of the deputation of the province which is to convey the loyal adhesion of the General Council to the foot of the throne. He started on the 28th of April. I hope to go very soon to Lyons, as I want to be there when the Duchess of Orleans passes through the town, which, they say, she is to do very soon.'

(This journey never took place. My father came back from Paris, after having seen the Princes, to whom he had been invariably but silently faithful. They offered him rank, pen-

sions, and other honours, to which he had a full claim, and which were lavished on all the other officers who, like him, had resigned their regiments rather than take an oath contrary to that which they had first sworn. He refused everything, being (as he said) sufficient to himself, and not choosing to burden the State with one charge more, at a time when France was sinking under the weight of indemnities, taxes, and loans necessitated by this terrible invasion. In my mother's journal we find strong admiration expressed for the modest and disinterested patriotism of her husband. Calm returned to her soul very soon after all these agitations.)

LXXXIX.

'Milly, Saturday, June 17.

'It is only at Milly that I recover my peace of mind, and where I can take account of what passes in my soul, especially in the little journeys which I make there alone. I have been here now all by myself for two days, and I go back to-night, to my great

regret. The country is quite delicious just now, and I always enjoy it, specially at this season. In fact, I am always happy here unless I am ill, or have a real heart sorrow. Even then, nothing soothes me more than the calm and beauty of Nature.

'I was reading a passage yesterday in Madame de Staël, which affirmed that, in order thoroughly to enjoy Nature, one must have either a strong sense of religion, or be in love. Even if we leave out the last, let us by all means believe the first. Oh, yes! one must have a religious spirit to enjoy thoroughly the marvels with which God has surrounded us. Besides, does not religion fill all one's heart? Is it not all love? Oh, how I pity those cold, dry, hard natures which are never warmed by Divine enthusiasm! How many senses are wanting to them! I sometimes think that in heaven there will be, for such souls, a happiness of a calmer and less intense kind than that which will be reserved for those ardent and sensitive natures which have received so large a share of the spirit of life and love. But, on the other hand, how much

more reprehensible will not such souls be if they divert these treasures from their legitimate object to spend them entirely on creatures who can give them nothing but death and emptiness in return. Oh, my God! my God! have I not felt this often enough, and with sufficient bitterness, when I have attached myself inordinately to anything which is not Thee? Grant me the grace to renounce this folly in future; that I may be henceforth Thine and Thine alone! It is time that I should make this resolution. Happiness has never failed me when I have sought for it at the only Source—which is Thyself.

'Alphonse has entered his name in the royal bodyguard with all the young noblemen of the country. He has left us, enchanted to be on active service; and I am very glad that he should be employed, even if it be only for a short time. His garrison is at Beauvais when he is not on duty at the Tuileries. He will come home in a couple of months when he has his leave. I do not think he will stay long in this corps, in spite of his military ardour: he has too much imagination, and is

too fond of change to be satisfied with the discipline of a military life in peace time. But his father, his uncles, and I, are delighted that he should (like all the rest) prove his zeal and devotion to the Bourbons: it will only be for a few years, and then we shall see. The Prince de Poix, who is at the head of this company, is, they say, enchanted with his personal appearance. He has been appointed instructor in the riding school, and he is there in his element; for what he loves best, next to his books, are horses.'

(Here there is a long break.)

XC.

'Easter Day, March 26, 1815.

'Ah! what a change from this Easter Day to that of last year! Our peace has been but a dream.'

XCI.

'July 22, 1815.

'I might well say that our peace had been but a dream! How hard has been the awakening! This fresh period of misfortune has lasted three months; but here we are

again, I hope and trust, at peace. God grant it may be for ever! But this unexpected return of Buonaparte has cost us rivers of blood, and France is ruined. The country is still overrun with foreign troops, and we fear that the Treaty of Peace is not even yet definitively signed. Yet the conditions proposed are very hard. Such is our position. I do not want to write down here all the events of the last eight months; they are chronicled everywhere. I will only say that, at the first rumour of the return of Buonaparte, Alphonse flew to Paris, where both duty and inclination called him. That he accompanied the King to Béthune amidst endless fatigues and privations. That there, being dismissed with thanks by the royal family, he came home, through many perils; soon after which he passed into Switzerland. But then came the battle of Mont St. Jean; the Bourbon Princes returned; and Alphonse went back to Paris; where he is striving to obtain a diplomatic employment, of which we have great hopes.

'Through what agonies have we not passed!

It is enough to say that Mâcon was taken in the middle of the night; that I was woke at two o'clock in the morning by the terrible noise of cannon, shells, and a furious firing in all the streets, mingled with the most horrible cries. I thought that we were all lost. I got up and made Césarine get up too and dress (as she was the only one of my children then with me), and we both knelt before my crucifix, and made the sacrifice of our lives to God, if it should be His good pleasure that we should die, thus commending our souls to Him. After that we felt a great calm. The Austrians soon became masters of the town, but did not abuse their victory. Only two or three houses were pillaged, which had been incautiously left open. By the great grace of God no misfortune happened to ourselves, for which I cannot be too thankful. Nothing fresh has occurred since the 17th of September. Cecilia was confined about five weeks ago, and again with a little girl, whom she is able to nurse herself, and who has been called Célénie. Both mother and child are doing well. Alphonse is still at Paris. One wishes

to be a mother; and yet when one has children in times like these, one fears and suffers in a thousand fibres of that heart which God has created.'

XCII.

(Happiness again dawned upon her. On the 16th of October, 1816, negotiations were entered into for a marriage between her second daughter, Eugénie, and M. Coppens d'Hondschoote, a young and brilliant officer, lieutenant-colonel of the legion in garrison at Mâcon, and son of the old Lord of Hondschoote in Flanders. A mutual attachment rapidly brought this affair to a happy conclusion. The marriage was celebrated at Mâcon on the day of the consecration of the new church. Her maternal joy is seen in her description of this ceremony.)

'It was settled that Eugénie should be married in the new church, which was to be consecrated that same day, and which is in our parish and close to our house. So, directly after the ceremony of blessing the church, which had attracted a great number of people,

we all met there. I had all my children round me ; Cecilia and Alphonse arrived just before, with my grandchild, Alice; the weather was beautiful. All the officers of the battalion were there, and their military band played appropriate tunes. Eugénie was beautifully dressed. She had a gown of embroidered tulle over a white satin slip, a head-dress and trimming of lilies and white roses, with a nosegay of the same, and a rich lace veil. She really looked lovely. Her husband, who is a very handsome man, seemed very proud and happy. The street was so full as well as the church, that I was terribly afraid some one would be hurt, and the coachmen were obliged to be very cautious to avoid an accident.

'The whole town was invited to our house afterwards for an evening party. I had taken a great deal of trouble to prepare the house for such a crowd. The dining-room was cleared for dancing and well lit. The colonel had sent us his military band, which played in the anteroom and sounded very well. In the drawing-room were card-tables. I had taken the bed out of my own room, which is very

large, and turned it into a supper-room. It held about sixty people at a time. In the dressing-room was another refreshment table for gentlemen. At midnight everyone sat down to supper. I had given myself no end of trouble; but it all succeeded, so that I was well repaid. People went away early, which showed their discretion. I had felt a great deal all day, and was not alone in my emotion! At last I conducted the new married couple to their apartment, and then went to bed myself, after commending them both earnestly to God. The next morning I went to high mass, and heard a sermon by a first-rate preacher, on the opening of the new church.'

XCIII.

'June 19, 1817.

'Alphonse is again travelling, and is at this moment in Savoy with the family of M. le Maistre, whose nephew, M. Louis de Vignet, a very distinguished young man, is his intimate friend. He is a youth of great capabilities and talent, though as yet, like those of my son, they are undeveloped. Like him,

also, he is inclined to melancholy. He always reminds me of the face of Werther in Goëthe, as I represent it to myself; but, like all his family, he is sincerely religious. This friendship gives me great satisfaction for my son on that account. He sadly needs an example of positive faith; for his religion is of that vague and freethinking kind which seems to me less a faith than a sentiment.

'From thence he will return to Paris. He is always striving in vain for some diplomatic employment, for which the example of my eldest brother and my own conversation have given him a decided taste. But we have not enough interest to force the doors; and our name, however honourable, has not sufficient importance to attract the attention of Ministers. He is sadly weary and impatient at not having any fixed occupation in life; and his sorrow reacts upon me, and makes me very unhappy.'

XCIV.

'June 20, 1817.

'I have just received a very good proposal of marriage for my third daughter, Césarine. She likes the young man, and he suits me in every respect. It is M. de ——, of an old family, who were formerly allied to mine. Césarine is wonderfully beautiful. It is quite an Italian type of face. They say she is exactly like Raphael's *Fornarina*. She is very popular, too, because she is so good, simple, and frank, besides being clever. Susan, the fourth, will be still handsomer, but she is quite another kind of beauty. She is like a statue of candour and virginal purity. Sophia, who is less attractive, is gifted with qualities of heart and mind which surpass all outward charms. How Providence and nature seem to have combined to shower gifts upon them! And what a strict account I shall have to give to our Lord, as the mother of them all!'

XCV.

'I am in great difficulties owing to having encouraged the suit of this young M. de ——

for Césarine, whom I love for his excellent qualities. My husband's family oppose it from certain miserable questions of fortune and position in society; and yet I feel that this marriage would make the happiness of both! They will not have much money, it is true. But we should be able to keep them with us. I am obliged to hide my strong inclination for this marriage from my husband's family; but if I were not to fight a little on their behalf, my poor children would never be allowed any marriages of affection! Nevertheless, my conscience is not quite at rest, and I have been perhaps to blame in letting those two young hearts believe that they were sure of eventual union. I consulted, however, a person who is entirely in my confidence, and he approved of what I had done. My God! grant that my good intentions may not be frustrated.

'The young man is more violently in love than ever, and comes as often as he can without giving umbrage to the family. However, when he comes too often I receive him somewhat coldly. But he is very discreet and of irreproachable morals and character. What

will be the end of it all? And what a painful thing it is to have a difference of opinion in a family on so grave a matter! I do not think that, in French society, people consider enough the hearts and inclination of the young in this the greatest act of their life—marriage. Fortunately for me, my parents let me follow my own taste. I owe all the happiness of my life to this tenderness on their part.'

XCVI.

'July 18, 1818.

'M. de Vignet, that great friend of my son's, who was staying with us, has just been summoned unexpectedly to Paris by the Ambassador of Sardinia, the Marquis Alfieri, who is also a great friend of Alphonse's. It is a capital start for that young man, who began to be as much discouraged as my own boy. Ah, what would I not give to see him also embarked in an honourable career! My health has been failing for some time, and I think my troubles and anxieties about him and the girls are in a great measure the cause of it. This ought to lead me to think more seriously. I

shall very soon be fifty-two, and having been rather stout all my life, I grow old sooner than others. These reflections should kindle in me a more fervent spirit of piety, that I may occupy myself more entirely with God. Instead of that, it seems to me that my soul partakes of the feebleness of my body; and that I have no longer that warmth of feeling which used to raise my heart to heaven, and make me feel so happy everywhere. I am cold and indifferent, and seem to cling more to earth and earthly things. Ah! it is not for old age that one must wait to work out one's salvation. Nevertheless, oh, my God! my will is still Thine: sustain it, and grant that I may give Thee all that remains of my poor life!'

XCVII.

'July 25, 1818.

'We are at Montculot with my brother-in-law, the Abbé Lamartine, who is infirm and weakened in body but not in heart. He overwhelms my girls with presents. After his death, he has left all his fortune to Alphonse. It is true that there will be more than two

hundred thousand francs charged on the property. But, at any rate, this will help in his marriage.'

XCVIII.

(August 4,
In the Park of Montculot, at the
Fountain of Fayard.

This is the truly Arcadian fountain which I have sung in my 'Harmonies,' under the title of *La Source dans les Bois.* (See Appendix.) I see that our mother had meditated upon this very scene in a more holy spirit than I.)

'August 4, 1818.

'It is one o'clock. I have been walking to the fountain of Fayard, which is a charming shady spot near the château. I like to meditate and pray there, for one is always the result of the other. I thank God for all the mercies He has bestowed on me during my stay here. I have recapitulated them just now, and they are great indeed. I am not so full of distractions as I was when I arrived here, and I have found a return of the peace and happiness of old times. I feel that more hours spent in solitude and retreat would give me

back my old piety, and consequently greater happiness. But I am going home, to find all my affairs, all my acquaintances, all my duties, real and imaginary, all my uncertainties, and all my troubles! My God! have mercy upon me. I tremble at all the worry I am about to have about Alphonse, Césarine, Madame Paradis (my old friend, who is so in want of help from me), and about a thousand other things. Oh, my God! give me prudence and courage.

'When walking this morning I tried to think how often I had already been here. I found I had been here six times. I think my journal is more useful to me than it would be to anyone else, because I have so little memory; and yet I like to remember the past, and the different positions in which I have found myself at different times. I think, also, it is good for my soul, and helps me in my self-examination.

'We are reading Masillon's Sermons, then the *Odyssey*, while my children are studying Ancient Roman History. They have behaved very well here, and are really charming in every way. But, alas! have I guided them

aright? Have I not often grave reproaches to make to myself? I am in great trouble at this moment as to Césarine. Oh, my God! my God! Thou art my sole hope. Do not forsake me. Repair my faults, and have pity upon me and my poor children.'

XCIX.

'August 15, 1818.

'The troubles and anxieties I undergo for my children will certainly shorten my life. Sometimes I feel as if I should sink under them. I feel, more than they do, the sorrows of each one of them. The idleness of Alphonse is my despair. Was he made for that? I have found him alone at Milly, where he had remained behind. He was calm and quiet, but very sad; living more than ever in his books, and writing verses which he shows to no one. From time to time his friends, M. de Vignet and M. de Virieu, speak to me of him with a kind of enthusiasm. But of what use are buried talents, even supposing they were real? Besides, what are those poetical dreams which find no echo, to a young man devoured with a

longing for an active life? I rejoiced so much in the return of the Bourbons, because I hoped that the family would then no longer oppose his wish for active service; and that those Princes, whom we have so faithfully served and so deeply regretted, would give my son some honourable employment. But, after three years of solicitation, we have not had even a civil word. I can understand that both Princes and Ministers are overwhelmed with applicants, and that they are not likely to seek in the provinces for young and unknown candidates. I suppose one must resign oneself to being forgotten. What is this world after all? Is it worth a moment's regret? I can feel this for myself, but for my son it is otherwise. At his age, illusions are as necessary as realities are to us. I cannot help fearing that he is cast down by some secret sorrow which he does not tell me, but which I suspect. It is not natural that a young man of his age, with so much imagination, should like to live in such complete solitude. He must have lost, either by death or other causes, some object very

dear to him, and which causes him so deep a melancholy.'

C.

'September 12, 1818.

'Yesterday Alphonse received a packet of letters from his intimate friend, M. de Virieu, summoning him in all haste to Paris. He has sold his horse to raise twenty-five pounds, and I gave him all I had been able to economise during the summer. He is now gone. M. de Virieu, who is in diplomacy, and who is as much interested in Alphonse as in himself, told him in his letters that the Comte de Lagarde, the French ambassador in Spain, had decided to take Alphonse with him to Madrid. God grant that this plan may succeed at last! . . . . . 'Alas! all has failed. Alphonse is come home more discouraged than ever, and more embittered by the events which condemn him to this cruel inaction. M. de Lagarde, who knew him, and very much wished to take him with him to Madrid, was yet obliged to go without him. How is it that I cannot obtain

for him that resignation which I draw from my own submission to God in prayer!

'My little Césarine's marriage is also broken off. I was obliged to tell the poor young man of it with many tears. The family persist in their refusal, and I am in despair! The poor fellow says he will go on hoping against hope. Césarine is very sad, but very touching in her submission. She is afraid, if she acted against the prejudices, however unjust, of the family, that their discontent would fall upon me; and, unhappily, we are dependent upon them in many ways. What a pity it is thus to wound and sever two hearts so pure, so fitted for each other, and who love one another so naturally and so innocently! Fortunately, I do not think that this love amounts to a passion in my poor child; but simply in a strong liking and grateful recognition of his intense devotion towards her. They must no longer meet. The family now urge upon her another marriage with a man of great merit, who has asked for her hand. I have spoken to her about it, and find her less indisposed to the idea than I am. She has

so much firmness and reflection! I cannot make out whether it be from devotion to me, or from a process of reasoning, that she has come to the conclusion that she will accept this offer if the family press it. I must study her more. Alphonse has spoken to her, and told her on no account to do violence to her own feelings, or ignore the sentiment she might have for some one else. He added that he would take her part against the whole family, until the time came when she would be at liberty to follow her own inclinations.

'But she replied that she had no feeling towards M. de . . . . save gratitude for the love she had inspired; that she was ready to obey the wishes of the family, and that without any real heart-sorrow; in fact, that she could marry without repugnance the estimable man whom they had proposed to her. I confess I was very much surprised; but it seems she has as much good sense as other charms. Happy will be the husband to whom Providence has granted such a treasure!'

(A few months later, on the 21st of Feb-

ruary, 1819, we read that Césarine's obedience had brought her happiness, at least of a reasonable kind.)

CI.

'Tuesday, February'21, 1818.

'We arrived at Chambéry on Monday the 17th, at 9 o'clock at night. The roads were bad, and the days long; but the family were waiting impatiently for us; we were received with great honour. Césarine has delighted everybody here, and suits the country people, who are a good, simple race. We are overwhelmed with civilities and attentions, I may even say with friendship. I am every day more thankful for this marriage, towards which, at first, I felt some repugnance, and which was in some ways very difficult to arrange. The country was unknown to us; the face of M. de Vignet was not attractive; his fortune was small; altogether I was very much afraid of doing wrong in the matter, and yet everything rested upon me. I prayed to God with confidence to enlighten and direct me; and I saw that everything really reason-

able and good was to be found in this marriage. I discovered that Césarine had no real repugnance to M. de Vignet's face and appearance; I was sure that she would love him in time; and I have the satisfaction of seeing that I was not mistaken: she loves him very much.

'His reputation stands very high; he is full of talent and cleverness and every kind of knowledge. His family are very much looked up to in this country, and he will probably take a high place in the career he has embraced through the interest of his uncle, the Comte de Maistre, who is chancellor. He has a charming sister, who lives with him, and one brother, the old friend of Alphonse, who was, in fact, the original cause of this marriage. I am therefore only too happy to have found a way out of the difficulty which my imprudence had brought upon me, and for which I have since so bitterly reproached myself. The truth is, I could not bear to give up that other poor young man, whom I had flattered with the hope of marrying Césarine, and I was dreadfully grieved at having to give him so much pain. But there was no hope of the family's

yielding; and so the kindest thing was to break it off as soon as possible. God has helped me, as He always does, and I thank and praise Him a thousand times for his mercies. The wedding at Mâcon was a brilliant affair, as was also our reception here.'

CII.

'Tuesday, March 9, 1819.
'At St. Amour, in Franche-Comté.

'I left Chambéry on Thursday the 4th, and carried out my plan of crossing the Mont du Chat to come here, where I arrived on Friday the 6th before nightfall. It is true that I had sent on a relay of horses to Yenne, but we had a very long and hard day's travelling on Thursday. The roads are not so very bad; but they make one nervous, for the mountain is very high and steep. M. de Costa, who has a château below, lent us two horses to help us in the ascent. But, in spite of that, I was obliged to get out and walk at many of the sharp and difficult turns in the road, where the carriage had to be lifted and carried. Once or twice I was horribly frightened, seeing

the enormous depth of the precipices, down to the Lake of Bourget below, into which the slightest false step would have precipitated us. The mountain is less steep when you descend on the other side. But at Yenne the danger recommences; the road is very narrow and without any parapet; on one side are frightful rocks, on the other the Rhône, very narrow and rapid, at the depth of 300 or 400 feet. On the other side of the Rhône are more steep rocks, and the state prison of Pierre Châtel. The country is most picturesque. There is a defile between two very high mountains, so narrow that one can scarcely see the sky. It is very long, and I felt all the time as if one of those great masses of rock would break off and bury us under the fragments. This drive made me realise more than ever the littleness of man, and his entire dependence upon God; as well as the need of being always ready to appear before Him. It is astonishing what risks people run without giving them a thought, and to what dangers they become accustomed. I was more struck by it there, perhaps, because I am so little used to such

travelling. But, after all, do we not run the same risks everywhere? Are we not always under the mighty hand of God, who can crush us in a moment as we do the miserable insect under our feet? And yet we dare to revolt in thought, and to think ourselves independent! We are full of pride and self-confidence. What madness! when nature herself convinces us of our utter nothingness.

I came here for a little rest—to the home of my daughter Cecilia (De Cessia), at St. Amour. She is very happy, adored by every one around her from the sweetness of her character, and with a charming family of children, who multiply year by year. I have had plenty of time to think of my sorrow at parting with my darling little Césarine, who was very sad too at my departure. I came here depressed and troubled; now a little calm reflection has soothed me. But I am never quite sure whether I have acted right or not. I think God wills that it should be so in order to keep me in a spirit of humility and self-mistrust. I daily commend to Him this very dear child. I have left her in the midst of

an excellent and deeply religious family, who seem disposed to love her immensely. Her husband is very much looked up to by every one in the country; and she likes him, although he is older than she is; while he has the most devoted attachment to and admiration for her. She will be in the very best and most distinguished society in the neighbourhood; and her income will be considerable, on account of her husband's appointment, although the hereditary property is not large; but he will have more by and bye. There is no great luxury at Chambéry, for the fortunes of most people are very moderate; so that I have every hope that the young couple will do well, and be really happy in spite of all my fears. Now my anxieties are turned towards Susan, who is a beauty of another type, but one which some people think incomparable. She was the idol of every one at Chambéry, and immensely admired by all the young men in Piedmont, when I took her there on the occasion of her sister's marriage. There is but one person thought of when she is present. But she is so childlike and simple that she does not

even dream of the admiration she excites. Already I have received several eligible offers for her hand. Ah! if I could marry her to some one nearer to us, and find also a suitable match for Alphonse! Then, even if no career were opened to him, he would at least be happy!'

CIII.

'Mâcon, March 18, 1819.

'Here I am at home again, but I cannot say "at rest." I find, on returning to France, that party spirit runs higher than ever, and that each side is terribly violent against the other. My husband and I are often bitterly reproached for our moderation. They want us to share in the anger of the Royalist party, to which we belong; but that would be neither in the spirit of religion nor of loyalty. You don't conciliate people by abusing them! My husband and I have been compelled to wean ourselves from those with whom we were formerly most intimate, and to live almost entirely alone. We content ourselves with feelings of faithful attachment towards the Bourbons, without losing our sense of justice and our peace of mind. Have we not per-

sonal feelings enough to struggle against, without rousing those miserable political passions which seem now to inflame all men's minds to such an extraordinary degree? My husband always says that he gave his blood for the Bourbons on the 10th of August, and that he is ready to do so again; but that he will not give up his common sense to the fury of their partisans. He is, therefore, silent; but this state of things is very painful to him. "It is thus," he exclaimed, the other day, "that civil wars are brought about." The enemies of the Bourbons are just as violent and unjust. Living between these two parties, we are proscribed, suspected, and disliked by both. Oh, my God! pour down on this unhappy land the spirit of justice and of peace. I found that Alphonse had again started for Paris. Alas! what can he do there?'

CIV.

'June 11, 1819.

'I saw to-day Madame de ——. She is an Italian, and one of the most beautiful and attractive women I ever met. She has an

expression which is soft and bright at the same time, and which wins one's heart as much as it dazzles one's eyes. The tones of her voice and her slightly foreign accent, thrill one through and through, She brought me tidings of Alphonse, whom she had seen a good deal of in Paris; and repeated to me some verses of his which I did not know. They are religious and melancholy stanzas, but through which breathes a strong feeling of *passion.*'

CV.

'Milly, September 4, 1819.

'Alphonse is come home: his health is good; but I have other causes of anxiety on his account. He has made the acquaintance at Chambéry of a young English lady, whom he is extremely anxious to marry. It seems that he was equally liked by the girl herself, and that they are engaged to one another; that is, as far as people can be who depend entirely on the will of their parents. How Providence mocks at our most carefully conceived plans! Here was I, murmuring and almost despairing at seeing my son without

an occupation or aim, wandering from one country to another merely for the sake of killing time, and wasting the fire of his youth in useless follies or unhealthy dreams; and now, all of a sudden, this very Providence offers us, by the hand of a stranger, a means of establishing him in an honourable career, and securing his happiness! As to my own, I do not speak of it; for, for a long while, it has been absorbed in his and in that of my girls.

'Now here is a letter sent me from Chambéry about this very young Englishwoman, who is well known to Césarine. Without being a beauty (often a gift more dangerous than useful to its possessor), she has agreeableness, grace, a beautiful figure, magnificent hair, an excellent education, plenty of talent, and a mind much above the average. She is of a good family in England, and well connected. Without being very rich, her mother, who is a widow, has a comfortable fortune, and she is her only child. Her father was a colonel of militia in England during the time of Buonaparte's threatened invasion. They used to receive the French emigrants with

great kindness in their house in London ; and especially a certain lady of high rank from Savoy, called the Marquise de la Pierre, who was pointed out to me at the Governor's, at the time of Césarine's marriage. She is a person who must once have been very beautiful. She passed all the time of the exile of the Kings of Sardinia in England till 1818. She has several daughters, born or brought up in London, who have lived with this young English girl as sisters. When they went back to Savoy they entreated her to come and accept of their hospitality in return. They were naturally proud to show her their country, their château, and the consideration in which they are held throughout the province, where their property has been restored to them. They have been living all together in a beautiful country house, with a large garden, at the end of the faubourg, and only a few minutes' walk from Chambéry. Their house is the *rendezvous* of all that is most distinguished in birth and literature in that pretty little town. They have concerts, and dances, and sketching parties, and riding

expeditions; in fact it is a little English colony in the heart of Savoy. Césarine often goes there with her brother-in-law, Louis de Vignet, who is Alphonse's great friend. He writes poetry, and reads it to these young ladies; and he read out once some poem of Alphonse's, with which all the company were delighted. They questioned him eagerly about his friend, of whom he gave an exaggerated description, comparing him to a young English poet, whose name I do not know, but who writes a number of mysterious and fantastic poems, which are very much the fashion at present. Louis promised to introduce his friend when he should pass through Chambéry on his return from Switzerland, where Alphonse has been lately living, quite alone, in a fisherman's cabin, on the borders of the lake.

'It is in this way that the acquaintance came about. Alphonse, whose reputation had preceded him (exaggerated by his friend), came to Bissy, which is a country-house of Colonel de Maistre, near Chambéry. From thence he went on to Servolex and to Chambéry, to see

his sister, Césarine; their meeting was like a scene in a novel. Everyone was curious to see and know Césarine's brother, and his personal appearance fascinated them all as much as his poems had inflamed their imaginations. The young Englishwoman did not conceal her admiration for the melancholy verses of the young Frenchman; her mother, who only obeys her daughter's wishes, encouraged the affair. Alphonse soon became the tame cat of the house. Through Césarine he spoke to Madame de la Pierre, and she again spoke to the mother of the young lady. But the difficulty, I apprehend, will come from my sisters-in-law here, and also from ourselves, in that the English girl is a Protestant. But Césarine re-assures me. She is longing for this marriage; and declares that, as the friend of the young Madlles. de la Pierre, who are very pious, she has imbibed a strong inclination towards our holy religion, especially during their intimacy in England; and that she would long ago have become a Catholic, but for the fear of grieving her mother. If she will promise Césarine to embrace our faith with her whole

heart, and bring up her children in the same, I fancy that the worst of the difficulties may be surmounted. But what trouble I am going to have to smoothe all these obstacles, and to mould all these various wills into one! Can anything be imagined more contrary to the feelings of those cold, severe, high-bred uncles and aunts of his, than a romantic marriage with a perfect stranger? I hardly dare speak of it to my husband and his brothers; and yet this marriage cannot take place without their consent. All the fortune of the family is in their hands. Alphonse has nothing but the allowance which his father gives him, and an interest in 50,000 francs on St. Point after our death. All the fine properties left by my father-in-law are in the hands of my brothers and sisters-in-law. If they are not settled upon him at the time of his marriage, how is it possible we can propose an alliance with a family so much richer than we are? Alphonse has neither fortune nor a career; at any rate, not at present. Love makes up for everything with the young. But it is not the young people who have to sign the marriage con-

tract; . . . in fact, I can neither eat nor sleep.'

CVI.

'November 9, 1819.

'Everything is at an end! Alphonse is come home. The mother of the young Englishwoman has carried off her child to Turin to preclude the possibility of a meeting with him whom she loves. In spite of it all, the young people write to one another now and then. I am very sad at heart. My husband, who is very much worried by money difficulties in consequence of the bad harvests this year, and the debts of his son (which must be paid before there can be any question of his marriage, so as not to deceive the family with whom he will be connected), talks of selling his house at Mâcon, and settling himself altogether in the country. If he does this, how shall I ever marry the two girls we have left? Who will come to seek for them buried in the solitude of a poor little village? This conversation with my husband, and the fear of having to sell my house, made me shed many bitter tears this evening. My two little

ones, seeing me cry, and never dreaming that they were themselves the cause of it, went and hid themselves in my little boudoir (called *Le Cabinet des Muses*, as the Nine Muses carved in wood are placed in the niches of the wall). Not finding them, I went into this room, and caught them both on their knees praying to God with many tears that He would strengthen and comfort me! How thankful I ought to be for such loving, pious children! But it only makes me the more unhappy to think that I cannot place them in such a position as they deserve.'

CVII.

'December 25, 1819.

'Alphonse has started this morning, though rather sad and thoughtful. M. le Baron de Mounier, who is very fond of him, has written to him telling him to come at once to Paris, where he sees a hope, at last, of obtaining for him a diplomatic appointment. The Ministry is changed, and M. Pasquier has been named Minister of Foreign Affairs. M. Mounier and M. de Rayneval, who think very highly of my son, say they have enough influence with

Monsieur Pasquier to get him appointed secretary to some embassy. Then he would be free to marry the person he loves, and his office would be sufficient to maintain them without any great increase of fortune. He is, therefore, once more hopeful.'

CVIII.

'Nothing fresh from Paris, except that I hear that Alphonse has been received with the greatest distinction in the very best society, where his personal appearance and his talents have produced the greatest sensation. Madame de Vaux, my sister, tells me the same; and mentions the names of a host of people, whose parents I knew in my youth, and who have given him the most flattering reception: among the rest, the Princess de Talmont, the Princess de la Tremouille, Madame de Raigecourt (the friend of Madame Elizabeth), Madame de St. Aulaire, the Duchesse de Broglie (daughter of Madame de Staël), Madame de Montcalm (sister of the Duke of Richelien), Madame de Dolomieu, whom I knew so well formerly at the Duchess

of Orleans'; besides heaps of eminent men, who have come forward to offer him their friendship (poor boy! he who was, only yesterday, so unknown): the young Duke de Rohan, the virtuous Mathieu de Montmorency, M. Molé, M. Lainé (who has the reputation of being such a great orator), M. Villemain (the pupil of M. de Fontanes, whom he has seen at the house of M. Decazes, the King's favourite), and many others. He is, however, only known to all these people by a certain reputation which precedes merit, and announces the coming fame of a young man.

'Thou knowest, oh, my God! how proud I am of this unexpected and flattering reception of my child. But Thou knowest, also, that I do not ask for him what the world calls glory and honours; but that he should be a good and honourable man, and one of Thy faithful servants, like his father. All the rest is vanity, and often worse'

CIX.

(Here the manuscript is stopped short, in consequence of my poor mother's sudden

journey to Paris. They wrote to tell her that her son was seriously ill with inflammation of the lungs; and she started at once in the night of the 12th of February, with her daughter, Susan, who was more like an angel guardian than any of the ordinary daughters of men. In the hurried notes she has left us of the details of her journey, one sees that she is horrified at Chalons-sur-Saône at meeting on the quay an indecent masquerade, in which every thing she most venerated, religion, royalty, and morality, were grossly caricatured. She received the most painful impressions from this scene, which she looked upon as an augury of evil. Passing by Auxerre, a voice from a public carriage called out to announce to her the assassination of the Duke de Berri; and she reached Paris in the midst of the distress and mourning which this event called forth. Fortunately she found her son convalescent; his friends had found him out in his miserable little lodging, and, by their care and tender watchings by his bedside, had striven to replace his absent family. Her heart beat more quickly when she heard that

the poems of this son had just appeared in a little volume, and had had the most astonishing success. In a few days his name had become famous. M. de Talleyrand himself, that disdainful and infallible judge, had deigned to express his approbation. The happy mother, the very day after the publication of her son's book, received a note written by the great diplomatist to the Princess ——, who had lent it to him: 'I have passed half the night reading the poems you sent me. My sleeplessness is in itself an approbation. I am no prophet, and I cannot tell what judgment the public may form of them. But my own impression from under my bed-curtains is: there speaks a real man. We must talk of them again by-and-bye.' And this was not all. The friends of her son, strengthened by the praise and esteem of the public, both men and women, took advantage of the enthusiasm on his behalf to redouble their solicitations to the Minister of Foreign Affairs; and M. Pasquier, who was himself a literary man, at once named the young poet Secretary to the Embassy at Naples. M. Siméon, Minister of the

Interior, sent him from the King, Louis XVIII., a beautiful collection of *Lemaire's* Latin Classics, with the most flattering commendations from the royal lips. He added, unasked, a pension from the literary fund for the encouragement of letters, which was intended to supplement the insufficiency of his diplomatic income. Life, fortune, satisfied ambition, glory, and, above all, universal esteem and friendship, burst all at once on the head of one whose existence had been so long embittered by delays which had brought him to the very verge of despair. The heart of his mother overflowed with joy and happiness. The celebrity of her son; the universal admiration at Paris of her beautiful little Susan; present joys and future prospects of increased happiness; the hope of a union so longed for by her boy rendered easy by the constancy of the young English girl, and by the dazzling effect of his celebrity on the mind of her mother—all these feelings fill the pages of her journal, during the next three months, with a kind of intoxicating joy. What she wrote, however, is too sacred to be inserted here; it must

remain as a secret between God and her own heart. But one portion, as we read it to-day, strikes us forcibly by the strange and prophetic coincidence of feeling between the mother and the son.

On the evening of Easter Day, 1820, she writes that being, as it were, *suffocated with her own happiness and that of her children*, she felt a longing, towards evening, to go and pour out her full heart in thanks and pious tears before God in that church of St. Roch where she had so often prayed as a child. She took with her her daughter, Susan, and, hiding herself under the shadow of a pillar, prostrated herself on the floor of the church to thank Him who had showered upon her so many blessings at once. The really beautiful hymn which she wrote in her journal on her return still seems to overflow with those tears of gratitude and joy which she shed in her ecstasy of thankfulness before God. All sons should read such words, that they may see how it depends upon them to pour real agony, or untold joy, into a mother's heart!)

CX.

(On the third of July, 1820, she opens her journal again, interrupted as it had been by weeks of travelling, cares, anxieties, and, finally, the sweetest satisfaction.)

'Mâcon, July 3, 1820.

'I have been so busy ever since the 31st of May, which is the last date noted down in this diary, that I have actually written nothing about that event of supreme interest, so much desired by me, and yet so little hoped for—the marriage of my son! It was celebrated on the 6th of June, in the chapel of the Governor of Chambéry. I had returned to Chambéry on Friday the 2nd. My daughter-in-law passed the few days which preceded her marriage in retreat. The ceremony was performed at 8 o'clock in the morning. The assistants were: the Governor and his wife and their Aides-de-camp; the Marquise de la Pierre and her four daughters; M. le Comte de Maistre; MM. de Vignet, and Madame. Olympe their sister; and Monseigneur the

Bishop of Annecy. The Abbé d'Etiola performed the marriage ceremony. My daughter-in-law was beautifully and tastefully dressed. She had on a white embroidered muslin gown, with a veil of magnificent lace, which covered her from head to foot. It is impossible to conceive a countenance of greater sweetness, dignity, and modesty than hers, while her whole manner betrayed the deepest feelings of piety and recollection. I cannot say half what I felt at seeing my son arrived at such a solemn and important moment in his life. I prayed to God with the utmost fervour, and yet now I feel as if I had not prayed to Him half enough. Who can measure the outpouring of gratitude and joy in the heart of a mother who sees the wish of her life thus realised? When the day dawns which thus assures the happiness of her children, her work on earth is done. I have still two left whom I hope to see at the foot of the altar for a like touching ceremony. Already negotiations are begun for the marriage of one of them—my beautiful Susan. Happy, oh! happy,

indeed, will be the man to whom God allots such a little angel upon earth!

'Alphonse and his wife and his mother-in-law started, after the double ceremony at Chambéry and Geneva, for Italy. He is going by slow journeys to his new post at Naples, under the Duke de Narbonne.

'I brought back my poor Césarine to Mâcon, to consult, on her way, a famous doctor at Lyons, as she is very far from well. In proportion to my happiness, God seems to permit sorrows for me of another kind, for I found, on my return, my dearest friend, Madame Paradis, who has been a second sister to me, in the very last stage of illness. Alas! I had expected it only too truly! I watched over her day and night for a fortnight. She seemed never to rest but when I was there, and expired in my arms, while giving me a last kiss. What a devoted friend I have lost in her! I had the happiness to inspire her with a greater faith and resignation than she had when our friendship first began, and she died in the fervent hope, and I may almost say certainty, of acceptance with God. What a blank her death

will cause me! She lived just opposite my windows at Mâcon, and at the least sign of trouble or sorrow on my face, she was there to bear more than half. She has left me a considerable legacy in remembrance of her unalterable and incredible affection. She wanted to leave me her whole fortune, as she had neither brothers nor sisters; but I would not let her. I consented at last to accept her little villa and property at St. Clement, at the gates of Mâcon. What would have become of me very often but for that incomparable friend, who was always at hand to guess my anxieties and wants for my children, who would forget herself to fly to my help on every occasion, and who often did so, far beyond her means! May our love become eternal in heaven! I will never pass a day or a night without praying for her. Now, when I look from my window at hers—once ever open for me, now always closed, or occupied by strange faces—how broken-hearted should I be if I could not feel sure that I should meet her hereafter in our true home! What do I not owe to the friends I have had on earth? I really think that

friendship is the visible form of Providence. The heart of God Himself seems to hear, and understand, and shelter us in the hearts of those who love us. By a special grace and privilege I have had devoted friends at every period of my life. And even when they are taken from me, I cannot feel that they are lost, but only gone behind the veil—they seem so present, so very near to me! I have still one left to me on earth in that dear and beautiful Madame Delahante; or rather, in spite of the difference in our age, she has adopted me like a second mother, and I see in her only another of my own children.'

CXI.

'Sunday, July 16, 1820.

'Some of the peasants having heard that there was a report in the papers of the assassination of Alphonse by the brigands on his road from Rome to Florence, had the cruelty to come crying, and tell me the false news. They had hid from me, it seems, all the papers which contained the account of this tragic adventure, of which I cannot imagine the

origin. Fortunately I had received this very morning a letter from him of a later date than that detailing this misery. I was, therefore, reassured about him, and had no occasion to be anxious; still the mere possibility of such an event has upset me very much. What would have become of me if I had not received that last letter? and how such false reports, carelessly printed by newspaper editors, might kill some mothers?

'I cannot help watching anxiously for another letter, as I cannot help fearing that there must have been some foundation for such a report, and that Alphonse, perhaps, wished to hide from me the terrible peril he may have run. I know, through his friend M. de Virieu, that he dreaded seeing again in Italy one who would never forgive him his marriage. Can it be this; or what? Perhaps it is nothing after all. May God bless him, as I do; but He alone can guard him from all evil!'

CXII.

(On her return to Milly, after so many vicissitudes and trials, she cannot help expressing

her sadness in several passages, at the blank in their home caused by the marriage of her son and daughters. And then she reproaches herself for this, as these very blanks are the conditions of their happiness. She was anxious too, at this time, about her son, who found himself thrown in the very midst of the Neapolitan Revolution. The political agitations of France under the government of two parties, each struggling with the other for power, turned her thoughts to political questions. These perpetual party fights, with all the passionate bitterness they engendered, made her regret more and more the unity of power and silent discipline of a patriarchal monarchy. We print these reflections without giving an opinion upon them. Both in religion and politics a son generally inherits the feelings of his mother, though not her dogmas. The son, as he grows older, no longer nourishes himself as he did as a child with his nurse's milk, but with the meat of a full-grown man. Nevertheless, it is impossible not to own that unity of power, in a president of the people (as among Republicans), or in a king

(as among Royalists), is more logical and healthy for society than the perpetual antagonism of this mixed government, which is called 'Constitutional.' There is no doubt whatever that the present state of things keeps people in perpetual warfare. Now there is no war without hatred, and mutual hatred is a fatal element in society: this is at the bottom of my holy mother's reasoning. Hatred is the opposite of charity, which means love, and God is love. Therefore all forms of government which produce in its citizens this feeling of mutual animosity cannot be according to the law of God. To this pious instinct, there is but one reply possible; and that is, that poor humanity is so unfortunately organised, that people have to choose between peace and liberty. And liberty is as divine a thing as peace! We will give her own words:)

'Under what a deplorable kind of government we are now living! and yet one which we are bound to respect, I suppose, as it is the will of the King. It appears to me quite contrary to the peace and charity which should

reign among Christians. Everyone is occupied in judging ill of his neighbour and in thinking all that is bad one of the other. Under the pretext of public good, every kind of evil is committed. Men make to themselves a false conscience, and as they are naturally led towards sin, so they give themselves up without restraint to their evil inclinations. Society has really become impossible. One person sets himself up against another, and each is afraid of the other. A kind of false shame too is mingled with it all, so that people speak contrary to their real feelings. No one dares defend the absent, however unjustly accused, for fear of being treated in the same way; and so they swallow injustice like water. And I, who feel all this so keenly, I become wicked too! I am less loving and charitable than I used to be. I fancy that my anger is only kindled against those who think and act wrongly; but those that I am thus blaming justify themselves by the very same belief! Oh, my God! give me back Thy peace! Grant that I may learn not to meddle at all in these things, and that I may keep myself

apart and free, as far as I can, from the bitter heart-burnings and animosities of this time, which must be so displeasing to Thee. My political opinions form and should form a part of my religion; and that makes me believe that a purely monarchical government is the best, because it is the one that God gave as a model to the world when He deigned to govern Himself the kingdom of Israel, and when, from the hardness of their hearts, they desired another king besides Him. A king divinely appointed is formed in the image of God, and should keep to himself all power and authority. The more he strives to associate the people with him, the more will their passions be roused. Is not a true monarchy like a great family, of which the king is the father? And where is the wise father who would think it necessary to make each of his children the judge of his conduct and of all the motives which should guide him in his operations? or who would give them the right to find fault with everything, to say and write everything, whether against the government or against any of their brethren, without being

even punished when they speak falsely? Would he not much rather prevent such wrong-doing in his children? and would it not be better, than to let them, unchecked, sow the seeds of such terrible misunderstandings amongst each other? Would such a father be really a wise man, I repeat? and would his conduct be in accordance with God's views and with the law of charity? Yet this is a picture of what is called a "Constitutional Government!" But, as for us, our duty is to be silent and pray; for what I consider the worst and most culpable course is, to speak and act against the established government; and, after all, we can work out our own salvation under whatever circumstances, or wherever the hand of God has placed us. My reflections, therefore, should have no other end than this, that, as far as I am concerned, I will henceforth try and keep myself aloof from all that goes on around me at present. I will not enter into political discussions if I can help it; and I will spend more time in solitude, meditation, and prayer; that must be *my* political creed!

'Alphonse is spending the summer in an island called Ischia, in the Gulf of Genoa; his descriptions of it are charming. But I am rather troubled about Césarine's health and about a marriage for Susan, who is just twenty-one. We can give her very little money; and if I do not take advantage of that wonderful beauty of hers (which is only another of God's gifts) to attract some really good and honest man, I feel as if I should be wanting in my duty towards her as a mother.

'This year I have adopted the habit of going to mass very early in the morning, in fact at dawn. I think we should offer thus the first-fruits of each day to God, and not to the business or pleasures of this world. I like to "render unto God the things that are God's," and then to give the world its due. Sometimes it is a great effort to go out in all weathers and to leave one's soft bed and warm room to attend what is called the "Poor People's" or "Servants' Mass;" but are we not all poor enough in the grace of God and the "servants" of our fathers, husbands, or children? I am thoroughly rewarded a little

later by the increased spirit of recollection which I feel in these dark mornings; by a greater fervour in my prayers; and by the calm and strength which I feel the whole day after, from the sense of my first duty having been accomplished, and from having attained in consequence a more vivid realisation of the presence of God. My taste would lead me to prefer living more entirely in retreat; but when I think of the two children I still have to marry and settle in life, and of the necessity of taking them out into the world, of which they are to form a part, I feel I am only doing my duty by remaining as I am, and that thought reassures me.'

CXIII.

'January 27, 1821.

'Alphonse writes me word from Rome that he is perfectly happy. Certainly this is not the usual tone of his letters, so that I feel it must be true. He sends me a little sum of money for his poor friend, L'Abbé Dumont, the curate of Bussières, whom he was always very fond of, and who is now in a state of great sickness

and destitution. This act of thoughtfulness, coming from such a distance, of a friend whom his present happiness and distractions might have made him forget, has touched me very much.'

CXIV.

'March 11, 1821.

'Good news! I hope to marry my beautiful Susan to a man who lives very near us and is in all ways eligible. M. de Montherot, a distant cousin of ours, a man of thirty-six, of distinguished ability and very good-looking, was immensely struck with her at an accidental meeting, which, however, he had indirectly sought. This marriage would make me perfectly happy on every account. His property is in Burgundy, and in the neighbourhood of Lyons. May the affair only succeed! My husband is very much pleased at the idea. Susan herself is, as yet, entirely ignorant that she has been the object of all these meetings and whisperings. She is so frank, simple, and obedient that I do not doubt her consent when I shall have spoken to her about it.'

CXV.

'March 11.

'Another piece of good news, though a few days later. God gives and takes away. Let us thank Him for His mercies, and submit to His dispensations. My daughter-in-law was happily confined at Rome on the 8th of March of a little boy, 'beautiful as an angel,' his father writes! and who is called, like him, Alphonse. He was baptized at St. Peter's in Rome. His godfather was the Marquis Gagliati, a Neapolitan; and his godmother the Princess Oginska, a Pole. This news has been a great joy to me. They declare that my little grandson is like me; if so, he must resemble his father at his age. His mother is most anxious to nurse him; I only hope she will succeed. They will come and see us as soon as her health is re-established.'

CXVI.

'May 12, 1821.

'I have told Susan everything, for she began to suspect that something was going on in

which she was concerned. She is goodness and reasonableness itself. I hope that God has sent her one who both can and will make her thoroughly happy. In the meantime, her imagination is so entirely under control, her heart is so pure, and she is so devoted to her duties, that she has not had a moment's trouble or anxiety. She has a sweetness and evenness of temper which delight me.'

(Here there is an interruption of three years in my poor mother's journal. Either the volumes have been lost, or else the anguish she went through during that time, through the death of Césarine (who sunk from exhaustion after the birth of her third child at Chambéry), and the fatal illness of her darling and beautiful Susan, left her neither strength nor moral energy enough to keep a record of her tears. During these years, her son and daughter-in-law had made two journeys, one to France and one to England, and had also lost their boy. Another child was born to them, a little girl, who soon became the idol of her mother and grandmother. She seemed destined to revive in many ways

the image of the latter, who preserved all her beauty even in spite of increasing age.

The manuscript is begun again on the 9th of June, 1824. The first pages seem as if written in the midst of her tears at the bedside of her much-loved Susan, whom she watched with untiring devotion through all those heartbreaking alternations of hope and despair, so common in that terrible disease.

Hers was a long agony, recorded hour by hour; and the last moment, though it opened the gates of heaven to an angel, darkened the whole earth to the poor inconsolable mother. I will only extract two or three of her notes at this time, which sorrow made somewhat monotonous.)

CXVII.

'June 29, 1824.

'I begin this new volume very sadly, for my heart is broken at the hopeless state of my poor Susan. I had a little respite for two or three days, when it seemed to me that the malady was in some way arrested. But yesterday I was in greater despair than ever; her weakness and the change in her face are

so terrible; and she is reduced to a perfect skeleton; yet she is all the while so sweet, so gentle, and so calm! Her husband was as much shocked and startled as I. Like me, he cannot give up all hope, in spite of the signs of coming dissolution, which ought to have prepared us long ago for the change. I had friends or relations to inquire after her yesterday all day long. I am very much touched by their kind sympathy and tender interest; and yet they do me harm very often by bringing back my thoughts to my cruel sorrow. I sigh for a deliverance, as if we were ever in this world to be free from trouble! and I forget that this is the time of trial. Yet I should indeed have learnt, by the sufferings of my poor little Susan, how we must be purified even from the smallest faults and imperfections in order to reach heaven. I suppose this illness is my dear child's purgatory, and if, innocent as she appears to us, she must bear all this, what will be our fate? Everything is painful to her, even the scrap of food she eats. . . . .

'Nothing now but a miracle can save her.

And yet such a miracle seems possible to those who pray as I do. Prince Hohenlohe, in the efficacy of whose prayers everyone in Europe has entire faith at this moment, is to offer the Holy Sacrifice for her intention on the 20th. We are all to join him in spirit at the same hour, and on the same day, at the church here. Ah! perhaps we shall, after all, through God's mercy, obtain the great grace of her recovery!

'Alphonse and his wife are in Switzerland. I have written to implore them to return, so as not to be quite alone, face to face, with a death which I cannot think of without despair, although I see it every day stealing over the face of my poor darling and holy child.'

CXVIII.

'July 1, 1824.

'We went away yesterday from the country-house at Perrières, which our good friends, the Cortemberts, had lent us, on the hill which rises above Mâcon and the Saône. The move was a very painful one; yet I felt as if she would get better when I had once brought her back to our own home at Mâcon. I have

put her in my own room, which is large and airy, and we carry her every evening into the garden. I shut my door to everyone, so that we are as quiet as if we were in the country. Our mass on the 20th, at the same hour as that of Prince Hohenlohe, was most comforting; but everything tells me that, not even by prayer, can she now be saved; the fiat has gone forth. Oh! I dare not think what bed she will exchange for mine!

'Alphonse and his wife and their little Julia are arrived. I cannot help seeing myself the child's extraordinary resemblance to me. What a happiness it is to see oneself living and flourishing again in another, when one's own little day is well nigh over! How I love that child! She is exactly what I was at her age, in all the happy innocence of one's early days! My Susan, who is scarcely of the earth now, received her God again on Monday with all the touching ceremonies of that holy and beautiful rite. I feared that she might be very much agitated; but no. By the grace of God, instead of being frightened or excited, her piety and peace have been redoubled in

consequence. All the day after, a kind of hidden spring of joy appeared in her countenance. In the evening she said to us: "Let us talk of my rest. I have done all I could for my conscience and for my health. Now God will do as He wills. I abandon myself entirely into His hands." Still, I think she has some hope of recovery at the bottom of her heart. But as she is so well prepared to live or to die, as it may please God, it would be a useless cruelty to deprive her of it. In the midst of my sorrow I felt a great satisfaction at the return of Alphonse and Marianne, whom I found much better than I expected.

'They arrived on Thursday, the 29th, and started again on Saturday for St. Point. The mere fact of a number of people moving about her room disturbs Susan and tires her, in spite of all my precautions.

'Alphonse came back on Tuesday till yesterday; he will return again on Monday, and will leave us as little as possible during this sad time. His kind and loving heart gives me every possible consolation.'

CXIX.

'July 14, 1824.

'My Susan is in the bosom of God since yesterday (Thursday), at ten o'clock in the evening. I will try, as far as I can, to remember all the circumstances of this death—so edifying, so sweet, so consoling for all true Christians, and yet so terrible for a mother. In the midst of my agony and the most touching scenes possible, God gave me a strength at which I was myself astonished, and which was certainly the fruit of the many prayers which had been offered up for us, of which I felt particularly the efficacy in the beautiful and holy frame of mind in which my poor child spent these last few hours.

'In spite of the sad state to which her body was reduced (which I spoke of the other day, and which was still further aggravated later on), not a single complaint or cry passed her lips, not even an expression of sadness. She thought of everything and everybody; and her only object seemed to be how she could best soothe our sorrow. On Sunday, seeing

her very ill, I begged the rector to come in in the evening as if of his own accord. She was very much pleased with his visit, and when we were together alone afterwards, she said to me, "Dearest mama, may I say something to you? You see I am afraid it may give you pain. But I am not more ill on that account; only I think that the sacrament of Extreme Unction is a grace which one should not neglect or put off till too late; and I should so like to receive it now."

'I found that she had already, while we were at Perrières, and without telling me, asked the rector not to let her die without receiving all the sacraments.

'She had profited by this occasion of speaking to him again about it; and after he had made her realise fully the great advantages of this last help for the dying, he ran to get all that was necessary, and then administered to her Extreme Unction, which she received with such lively faith and love, and such angelic piety, that it struck everyone around her. She only begged that they would not tell her husband, who was fortunately absent

at that moment. Madlle. de Lamartine and Sophie were present, and I also, though half hidden in a corner of her room, overwhelmed with grief, and yet not without consolation. I had often pictured to myself this terrible moment, and fancied I *could* not bear it; but I felt quite differently after the ceremony.

'Susan herself was cheerful, almost gay. We prayed and talked together with the same mutual calm as if what had just passed had been an ordinary act in our lives She said smilingly about one or two persons who came to see her: "Are they, too, in the secret?" The next day she begged to have a crucifix on which the Christ was larger and more defined, although there was one in relief on the wall of her room, and that she had a picture of the crucifixion close to her bed; but she wanted to have one in her hand which she might kiss. Fortunately, I found a silver one such as she wished for; and from that hour till the moment of her death it never left her side. She kissed it very often, and then would lift up her eyes to heaven in silent prayer. She never took the least thing with-

out making the sign of the cross before and after. Every five minutes she would ask me to read prayers to her. I used to say whatever words God inspired me to utter, or else read to her some of the most consoling verses I could find in the Psalms. Very often she had terrible fits of exhaustion or suffocation, and we fancied she was in her last agony; but prayer always consoled and calmed her. The three last days of her life were passed in this way. She had a little sleep at night, though not much. We used to leave her at eight or nine o'clock in the evening with a nurse, who slept in her room; a most holy, good girl, whom I look upon as a saint, and who has lived with us for upwards of twenty years. She used to sleep in the little dressing-room alongside, but Sophie and I used to get up several times during the night to see how she was. Though she was in such holy dispositions, she had still some hope of life. She never spoke of her child, or asked to see him at last. I am sure it was from a spirit of sacrifice, and because she feared that the sight of him would make her cling more to

earth. The evening before her death she said to her husband: "Oh, dearest friend, how happy one is, when in my position, to feel that one has done all one could, and to enjoy peace of soul! You will do the same, will you not? If you ever have a serious illness,"—she paused a minute, and then added with greater eagerness, "you will promise me, will you not?" I had forgotten to say that, the evening before, she had received the Benediction for the Hour of Death. She asked me to give her my blessing every night from Monday to Thursday; I thought that each hour of those days would be the last, and when evening came and she was still alive, I felt there was something gained, as she was always quieter at night. On Thursday morning her oppression and difficulty of breathing were so great, that we were obliged to change her bed. This we did as little as possible, for she was in such a state of exhaustion that we always feared she would die from the effort of moving. It was poor Sophie who used to manage it all, with a skill, a patience, and a tender sweetness which never

deserted her for a moment during the whole of her sister's illness. I feel that God will bless her for all her loving care. That day she was troubled from time to time by uncomfortable dreams. She said to me in the morning: "Mama, I dreamt some painful things about you; do you really feel quite well?" I told her "Yes," and asked her what she had been dreaming? She replied, "of accidents," . . . and then her ideas became confused, and she added no more. The rector came in. She said to him in a low voice: "I am afraid of wishing too much for death, because I feel so happy, so prepared, so full of faith and hope and love, that I shall never be more so. If my life be prolonged, I should have to begin all over again with my soul. Perhaps, though, this is idleness?" . . .

'Alphonse alone was with us; he strove to hide his tears and the emotion of his voice. She spoke to him from time to time, and gave him her hand to hold. She then blessed her child, who was in another room, exclaiming: "Oh! may he be brought up, as I have been,

in a faith which makes it possible to accept cheerfully such bitter separations!"

'I cannot express the effect of her smile upon me when her eyes met mine. It lit up altogether that face, once so beautiful, now so worn and drawn and changed, when not transfigured by the soul within.

'Generally she used to ask me to pray out loud for her by her bedside. Her brother, kneeling by the door, listened and prayed too. Oh, it was a most touching sight!

'Towards seven o'clock she fell into a kind of lethargy, and seemed to want to go to sleep. I went and laid down to take a few moment's rest after so many sleepless nights. At twelve o'clock I was woke by a fearful storm, which seemed to shake the very roof. I ran to listen at Susan's door, not daring to open it for fear of disturbing her in her sleep. I heard nothing, and flattered myself that the storm had not disturbed her. At four o'clock I went back again; always the same stillness. I then made a little noise to attract attention. One of the nurses half-opened the door, and said that the night had been quiet, that she

was resting, and wanted for nothing. Alas! it was but too true; but I took it in a material sense, and went back to bed till five o'clock. Then I could stand it no longer; I had a presentiment that something was wrong; I went straight into the room unexpectedly, and saw that holy girl of whom I have spoken (Philibert) on her knees, and at the foot of the bed a row of lights. Yet even then I did not at first take in the truth; I thought that they were praying at her request; but Sophie and Alphonse came forward and drew me away, and then I felt and knew that all was over. . . . .

'We were obliged to get her husband away, who was simply beside himself with excess of grief. I ran to kiss her poor little Charles in his cradle, who was sleeping so sweetly, poor child! little dreaming that he had just lost the most precious part of his future life. Alphonse remained alone in the house to see after the last sad duties towards his angel sister. . . . .

'The nurse and Philibert gave me a minute account of that last night. Her dying mo-

ments were passed as gently as possible. She had no agony of any kind. Soon after we had retired she said to the nurse, "Why don't you go and lie down? You will be so tired." She accordingly went behind the curtains as if to go to bed; but she was anxious and went on watching her. She saw my darling, after a few moments, kiss her little crucifix, and then heard her sigh heavily once or twice —and then all was still—her pure soul had gone forth in that last sigh. It was then just ten o'clock; the nurse and Philibert agreed that they would tell no one that night; and thus my Susan went to heaven.

'There is no bitterness in my grief. For more than a year I have wept with the anticipation of this sorrow which I strove to put aside, but which I foresaw, in spite of myself. Now, I do not cry any more—perhaps it is that I am stunned by the very force of the blow. Oh, my God! take me also! I wish only to live for that heaven to which I have shown my children the path, and where they are beckoning to me to come and join them. Ah! family ties are cruelly wrenched asunder here;

but eternity reunites them, and that for ever and ever. I have the dear little crucifix which was found in her hand. I venerate and kiss it fifty times a day. I mean to wear it always till my death. . . .

'I am at St. Point with my son. We read Fénélon out loud together: in our present state of mind, nothing can comfort us but books which speak of things above. All the rest seems so short, so empty! . . . What should I do without my little Sophie? (her last daughter). She strives to multiply herself to hide the sad blanks which death or absence have made in our home.'

(A long interruption follows, with only here and there a notice of the departure and return of her son, and of the anxieties which the failing health of my father gave her.)

CXX.

'Tuesday, December 4, 1824.

'Alphonse is returned from Paris. He has not been appointed to the French Academy. M. Droz has been elected instead of him, and I am sorry for having proposed to my son to

put himself in nomination. I was still more vexed on account of my husband, who was very anxious for his success. But God and men did not will it, and one must accept the disappointment without bitterness and without murmuring. However painful it may be, it is not to be compared with a heart-sorrow.'

CXXI.

'Tuesday, January 4, 1825.

'The visits, compliments, and rejoicings of this first day of the New Year, which gives me back nothing of what I have loved and lost, have been very painful to me. I could not help crying in answer to some of the people's good wishes. My wishing-days are over; who will give me back the past? I had a moment's hope of having a second Alphonse in my grandson, but all these hopes are at an end. I am very thankful that *he* has been spared to me, and am far prouder of his tenderness for me than of what is called his celebrity. He knows how to love; that is all I wish. May he love what I love—that faith

which gives me peace here, and a sure hope of heaven hereafter! I enjoy very much having his wife and himself with me this winter, and am already unhappy at the thoughts of our inevitable separation in the spring. But his lot is to live out of France, and I must like it for him, if not for myself.

'The last days of Buonaparte at St. Helena have filled my thoughts a good deal of late, and made me reflect very seriously on the ways of God, and the nothingness of all earthly glory. The death of Lord Byron, the great English poet, has also struck me very much. God is great! One thing only is necessary—to fear and to love Him. I went to announce this last death to my son with fear and trembling, as if it were a personal misfortune. Perhaps some day a mother may, in the same way, announce to her son the death of mine! May it be in the grace of God, and in full reliance on His mercy! I care little for his earthly fame: it is his eternal happiness that I wish for.

'Alphonse is writing a poem called "Childe Harold," in which he celebrates the heroic

death of Lord Byron, for the cause of Hellenic independence. But there are passages in it which give me pain. I fear he has a dangerous enthusiasm for those modern ideas of philosophy and revolution which are so contrary to religion and loyalty; those two sign-posts on my road, which ought to be likewise his. Beyond this track I see nothing but fogs and precipices, and, above all, the bottomless gulf of infidelity.

'I have known plenty of those famous so-called philosophers in my youth. God grant that he may not be like them! I have remonstrated with him strongly on the danger of these ideas. But *the wind bloweth where it listeth*, as it is said in Holy Scripture. When a mother has brought up a son and launched him into the world, after having inculcated upon him, as far as she can, her own faith, what can she do more, except spread her feeble hand between the light of faith and the wind of this evil century which strives to extinguish it? Ah! I am sometimes tempted to be proud of my son, but I am punished

afterwards by my fears of his rationalistic spirit!

'As to myself, *to obey and to believe* seems to me to be the only true wisdom: they tell me it is less poetical; but I find as much poetry in submission of spirit as in revolt. Are the good angels then less poetical than those who rose against the power of God and so fell away? I would rather that my child had none of those vain, worldly talents, than that he should turn against those doctrines which are my strength, my light, and my joy!'

CXXII.

'February 20, 1825.

'The same retired life under the same roof with Alphonse, his wife, and my little Sophie, whose education gives me no trouble, for she is one of those children who is born good as the nurses say. We read out loud by our fireside in the evening such books as both interest and instruct us. My husband seems to like now this very quiet retired life, in which a new book is the one great event. There is always an age when men like to withdraw

from the big or little scenes in which they have played a part, and when they become quiet and indifferent spectators to the things of this world. Books are then their principal resource; history recals the real, and novels the imaginary, events which have passed before their eyes. Books are really the life of those who have ceased to live in themselves, and who revive again in the thoughts of others.'

CXXIII.

'Sunday, June 26, 1825.

'What a long interval without a line in this journal! The fact is, I have been very suffering. I doubted the possibility of recovery at one time; and, fancying death near, I thought of it with terror, for I did not feel ready. Are we ever enough prepared? I only asked for a prolongation of life to have time to prepare and purify myself more; and God has given me that grace. But just when I was recovering, He sent me a sharp sorrow, which I heard accidentally and without being in any way prepared for it. Alphonse, in a little poem on the King's coronation, had said nothing of the

Duke of Orleans, whom he cannot bear, because he has all the prejudices of the whole Lamartine family against him. He thinks there is something very *louche*, and of doubtful propriety in the conduct of a Prince of the Blood Royal, whose father had the misfortune to condemn his King to death (the innocent and good Louis XVI.), who was then received, forgiven, and even overwhelmed with riches and honours by the Bourbons of the elder branch, and yet who, instead of testifying his boundless devotion and gratitude towards them, does nothing but pay court to their enemies and make himself popular at their expense. He never speaks against this (what he calls) disloyalty, without a certain amount of bitterness, which pains me, for I believe the Prince to be an honest man, and quite innocent of the crimes of his unfortunate father. I own, however, that he ought to show a greater reserve in his opposition than any one else, and not allow himself to be surrounded by all the ambitious, discontented Revolutionists or Buonapartists who form what is called the "party" of the Duke of Orleans. But we

should look to his intentions, and not judge him unjustly.

'When Alphonse read to me the verses of this poem, in which he celebrates all the warriors and princes of the royal family without even naming the Duke of Orleans, I was very much vexed; so much so, that I could not help crying about it. I implored him not to pass over altogether in silence a Prince in whose house I had been brought up, and whose mother and sister had overwhelmed my family with kindnesses. For a long time he resisted obstinately, saying that he owed nothing to the Duke of Orleans but silence; that he was bound to the kings Louis XVIII. and Charles X. by the oaths of military and diplomatic service; and that he had inherited from his father devotion to them and repugnance towards their enemies. Nevertheless, at last, I obtained or rather dragged from him (by my tears and my authority as mother), a promise that he would make some mention of the name of the Duke of Orleans in this homage to the family of Bourbon. He yielded to satisfy me; but he was unhappy at giving expression

to sentiments which he did not feel. These verses, which alluded to the 21st of January, and to the murder of the King Louis XVI., were looked upon by the Duke of Orleans as a personal insult. I do not know how, but he got cognisance of them through his bookseller, even before they were published. He wrote a letter to my son through our cousin, M. Henrion de Pansey, who was president of the Council; and M. de Pansey, in the Prince's name, demanded the suppression of the passage, though in courteous terms. Alphonse answered at once, with great respect, that he had no intention of wounding the feelings of a Prince whose family had shown such kindness towards his mother, and that he would hasten to write to his publisher to suppress the lines which had unintentionally given pain to the Duke of Orleans. He wrote, in fact, by the very same post to his publisher to omit the passage. Everything seemed at an end, when the Duke of Orleans, not knowing that Alphonse had at once complied with his wishes, and being more impatient than was necessary for the suppression of the passage,

caused a second letter to be written, in which he threatened him with a withdrawal of his credit at court, telling him to take care, as the first Prince of the Blood had always plenty of opportunities to make his resentment felt by a young man who had so gravely offended him. On the receipt of this most uncalled-for and intemperate letter, the natural pride of my boy was roused. He declared that, on no account, would he yield to threats what he had at once granted to an expressed wish of the Duke's; and he instantly wrote to his publisher to re-insert the passage. However, not to give offence to the Duke of Orleans without an explanation, he wrote to him that same day to say, that the newspapers, having already published that threatening letter (which could only have been known to them through the indiscretion of some one at the Palais Royal), the suppression of the passage (already quoted by these papers) could only be attributed to a cowardice in every way dishonourable to his character; and that he hoped that the Prince would understand himself this point of honour, and would not attribute it to any in-

tention to offend him. One must be just. The Duke of Orleans replied at once that he understood the difficulty in which my son was placed by the indiscretion of the liberal papers and the consequent necessity of his inserting the obnoxious passage. All therefore had been said on both sides which could be said; but it was a great sorrow to me, and I was far more vexed about it than I dared own to my husband or my son, for I had been overwhelmed by the favours of this noble house from a child, and I had learned from my mother to respect and cherish their very name. In all the sad and painful circumstances of past years, I had had recourse to the affection of Madlle. d'Orleans, not only for my mother, but for several other members of my family; and she had always been most kind and generous at heart towards me. My son was ignorant of the intimate relations which had existed between us, and I could not tell him of them. My perplexity and trouble may be imagined, therefore, at the bare thought that this excellent Princess might attribute to ingratitude, or forgetfulness, an offence to her house which

came from the hands of my own son! I passed the night in tears, and wrote the next morning to Madlle. d'Orleans to explain all the circumstances to her, and tell her of my sorrow. She replied at once, less as a Princess than as an old and dear friend. She thoroughly understood and sympathised in my position, only expressing her sorrow at the annoyance the whole affair had cost me. Thank God! all is happily arranged. But I fear it will leave a coldness and secret irritation between my son and the Prince, which will estrange him more and more from the house which should be that of his natural protector. But the prejudices of the gentlemen Royalists of the provinces against the Duke of Orleans are unjust and extreme, and run in the veins of both father and son. In a word, I have been very much annoyed about this, and all the more, as I could not confide it to any one. The susceptible pride of my husband would have resented my correspondence with Madlle. d'Orleans, and still more the favours which my family have received from her on so many occasions.

'Alphonse is going away again for a long

time; he believes he is to be sent to Germany. I cannot help crying when I think of it. How sad and empty now is our dear old home, once so full of life and noise and movement! It makes me think of those great nests which we see in the autumn on the elms in the courtyard of St. Point. Instead of eggs and little ones, there is now nothing but snow; while the wind carries off the lining, straw by straw! What, after all, are we?'

CXXIV.

'September 18, 1825.

'My St. Point children are at last started on their great journey. How solitary I feel! They are going to live in Italy, God knows for how long. I am going back to Mâcon. Since my husband has given up shooting he prefers that to the country. I am very sorry for it. I was happy in my sadness here. I lived in the morning with Nicole (his *Moral Essays* strike me forcibly) and with Madame de Sévigné in the evening, who was always my favourite *causeuse* (talker). And then, how many thoughts and prayers for the ab-

sent and the dead! Yesterday I had a visit from that excellent, amiable, and resigned M. de P——, who had so much wished to marry Césarine. We did not speak of her directly; but his very presence and the tenderness of his manner said enough. I cried very much. All those whom I see, and who have loved my children, bring back their sweet but sad memory. I feel that my life henceforth will be passed in tears. Yet I have the absolute certainty of meeting them again. What consolations are to be found in this belief! If religion did nought for us but give us faith in the reunion with our loved ones and the new birth of the sweet past—who has not loved and lost ?—it would still be an untold blessing.'

CXXV.

'October 24, 1825.

'I am alone here in order to put everything away in the house, which is to be shut up; all the rest are gone to town with my husband. I have been to St. Point on a donkey, with the gardener, to settle his books, and to see that the orange trees, and other scarce

shrubs and flowers (which my daughter-in-law, Marianne, so specially recommended to me when she went to Italy) should be properly cared for. Heavy rain came on, which prevented my return that day, and I stayed at the dear old deserted château, so kindly looked after by that admirable Marie Litaud, who is a real saint upon earth, and who takes care of the house in the absence of its masters. I secured her happiness when I gave her up to my son. I was near the church—that church which I love so, and where I have prayed so often with my darlings, who are now saints in heaven. It was an immense comfort to me to go and pray there once more. I was surrounded with books, perhaps only too many. I enjoyed the silence and the solitude, sitting by the great fireplace in the drawing-room; and tried to fix my thoughts on eternal truths before I was again plunged in the bustle and movement of the world in which I live. I have received good news from Florence, where my son and his wife are now settled. What they have done here is very wise. I think one ought to have a place

of rest in perspective for one's thoughts as much as for one's furniture.

'Certain passages in the journal of Madame de Genlis contain a furious attack on my son's poetry. It is, in truth, only the carrying out of an hereditary feud between the two families. Madame de Genlis and my mother had two opposite camps in the Palais Royal. I cannot help feeling very much these attacks on my son's reputation. I should have liked to answer them, but I suppose that is only my mother's vanity. It is better to accept such humiliations without resentment, and, if possible, without bitterness of heart. Of what use would our profession of charity be if we could not forgive these pin-pricks? And why is it that we always wish for the best of everything both for ourselves and our children? If we had it, our duty would be not to set too high a value upon it. If we have it not, then let us not envy those who have. The gifts of God are graces, not merits. I will try and get used to these disparaging articles with which the Orleanist and Buonapartist papers overwhelm my son. I have only too much pride and

self-love on his account, which disguises my own. But then I am his mother; which must plead my excuse.'

CXXVI.

'February 1, 1826.

'I have no time to write; the care of the poor during this terribly hard winter absorbs all my time; for I am president of the charitable society of the town, and, do what I will, I cannot meet the demands. I am ably seconded by a most accomplished and charming woman, Madame de Villeneuve, whose husband is prefect of the department. She is like a daughter to me. I do not know why so many young women are so kind to and so fond of me. I fancy it is in return for my own liking for them; for my heart goes out in love and tenderness to girls who remind me of those I was so accustomed to love. Madame de Villeneuve has painted some beautiful screens for me, each representing one of the different châteaux belonging to Madame de Sévigné. Madame de Sévigné is the writer with whom my mind and heart have the most in

common; and Madame de Villeneuve thought that she would give me these little illustrations of works which she sees so continually on my table or on my lap. What good company a favourite book is!'

CXXVII.

'April 27, 1826.

'The Abbé de Lamartine is dead; for a long time his life has been a long preparation for this supreme moment. I trust that God will be merciful to one who has always been so good to others. He had been forced into the ecclesiastical state against his will, for he was not suited for it in any way. He lived all alone on his beautiful property of Montculot, which he has left to Alphonse, only charging it with an allowance to us, and a certain sum to each of his five sisters. We have written to him to ask for leave to come and arrange his affairs, and to take possession of his beautiful new home, with its extensive gardens and forest; and I hope he will obtain it.'

CXXVIII.

'May 24, 1826.

'I have been cruelly anxious and unhappy these last few days, owing to a terrible business of Alphonse's, caused by a passage in his poem of *Child Harold* with regard to Italy. He has been seriously wounded in a duel by Colonel Pépé. I have trembled as much for his soul as for his life, and it has upset me so terribly that I cannot write any more to-day. If he has been guilty in the sight of God, I feel sure he will have repented of it. They write me word that he is better, and that the whole matter is hushed up. He is writing now, during his convalescence, some hymns or religious poems, which he calls *Harmonies;* and has sent me some specimens which are quite after my own heart. Ah! this is the use to which I always hoped he would put his talent, which will only be really divine in proportion as it rises to God.'

CXXIX.

'Milly, July, 1826.'

'I have passed three days at Milly without being in any way bored. I should like to live

here, altogether, but with my husband and Sophie; it is too sad to be separated one from the other! I begin to feel a good deal the increasing languor of old age, which is fast creeping upon me. I have no longer that physical and moral activity which made me enjoy myself so much at all times, even in solitude. I feel the weight of my sixty years, at which I am just arrived, though I find it difficult to believe it sometimes! But the thought does not sadden me, if only God will give me the grace to employ aright the short time which remains to me, and to think only of preparing myself for that eternity which is hastening so rapidly. I feel I am still distracted and occupied with the things of this world. I have been watching with perhaps too much anxiety the condition of our vineyards. A terrible drought had nearly destroyed them. But now they have recovered, and look beautiful. The whole of our next year's income hangs on those little bunches of grapes! Man is certainly very like an insect which feeds on a leaf, and dies if that leaf perishes. My God! protect these leaves, and

especially the leaves of our poor peasants! Alphonse has been appointed *chargé d'affaires* in Tuscany, at Lucca and Parma; and now that all the ambassadors in Italy are absent, except at Rome, they have increased his salary by 20,000 francs. They are very much pleased with him, and he is delighted with his new position. Perhaps he thinks it necessary to represent the luxury of his country a little too much, but Providence will take care of him. I have no longer any need to trouble myself about him, and by his tenderness and devotion and his anxiety in all my little affairs, he rewards me sevenfold for all the sorrows and sacrifices which his youth cost me. I should, indeed, be a happy mother if I had not lost the two fairest flowers of my crown. Ah! what a blank their departure makes in my garden when I walk there in the evening, and unconsciously seek them. I *must* be detached, whether I will or no, from this world. I feel that my night is drawing very near. How many hours remain to me in this miserable world, God only knows. I do not reckon. I abandon all to Him. I only

ask of Him to let me stay long enough to merit still greater happiness. I have just begun a piece of carpet-work which probably will be my last. It is a foot-rug for Alphonse's room at St. Point. As he treads it under his feet when I am gone, he will think that each of these stitches was woven in with a thought of and a prayer for him. Ah! this carpet will last one hundred years or more, when neither I nor they will be any longer on this earth. . . I cannot help feeling very sad this evening.'

CXXX.

'Sunday, December 3, 1826.

'There is a question of a marriage for Sophie: when that is accomplished my work will be done, and I shall be able to say with the venerable Simeon:—"Now, Lord! let Thy servant depart in peace." The gentleman is a M. de Ligonnès, of an old family at Mende, in the mountains of Cevennes. He is a clever and accomplished man, of the highest character, and with a fortune which, without being very large, is quite sufficient for comfort. This is

not a country where great luxury is required, and Sophie is the very type of reason and good sense.'

CXXXI.

'May 5, 1827.

'My eldest brother-in-law, the head of the family, M. de Lamartine, died on Sunday last at eleven o'clock in the morning. He was nearly eighty years old. He had preserved all his faculties and sound common sense to the last. My sister and I received his last farewell and his last sigh. He is very much regretted in the whole country, where he was universally beloved. He was a man of great superiority of mind and of uncommon cultivation. His knowledge was almost universal, and hence his conversation was most interesting and instructive. He may be said to have reigned, all his life, over his own family and the whole neighbourhood. In his early youth he was an officer of the Light Cavalry to the King, Louis XV. His delicate health compelled him to return early in life to Mâcon, where he managed the great estates of his father, both here and in Burgundy and

Franche Comté. Every one listened to him as to an oracle, and he well deserved it. He had been intimate with all the most eminent men in the Constituent Assembly, especially those distinguished for science or literature, such as M. de Buffon, Mirabeau, &c. He kept up a fine establishment here with his sisters, who were unmarried like himself. He has left his property of St. Pierre to be divided between Alphonse and his niece, Cecile (Madame de Cessia); and his beautiful place at Monceau to his sister, Madlle. de Lamartine, to revert after her death to Alphonse. Nothing was ever decided in the family except by or through him. This absolute authority had often been exercised contrary to my views and wishes, and had frequently caused me bitter vexation, both on account of the marriages of my daughters and the guidance of my son. But perhaps I was wrong, as everything has ended so well for them. Madlle. de Lamartine, his sister, is enormously rich, but in reality very poor, for she refuses herself absolutely *everything* to give to those who are in need or misfortune.

She is a perfect saint, and more detached from the things of this world than any one I ever knew. But there is nothing in her holiness which wounds or exacts a great deal from others. Once out of the church, or the oratory, where she passes so many hours of her life, her piety only makes itself known by increased kindness and sweetness towards every one who comes in contact with her. She has the smile of the beatified, and a look of heaven in her eyes, which I never saw in those of any other human being. Her only fault is an excessive scrupulosity as to herself. She does not trust enough in the infinite mercy and generosity of God. But she is a blessing to the whole family, and, I may add, to the whole town and neighbourhood.

'The preliminaries of Sophie's marriage are settled. M. de Morangier, our neighbour, and a sort of distant relation through his wife, had originally introduced the young man to us, and pressed his suit. I was at once charmed with his modest and pleasing appearance, and with the high-bred delicacy with which he spoke of everything. I think his is

one of those rare and exceptional natures which at once secures happiness to a woman. But, alas! he will carry off my little Sophie very far! They are only to pass six months of the year with us. What will become of me without this daughter, who has remained to me as the shadow of the others? She is simple and truthful as a child of eight years old, and yet as wise and sensible as a woman of sixty. She has been for years my counsellor and confidante in everything. I fancy it is this perpetual and intimate intercourse with her which has made her so forward for her age. As to her goodness, she is an angel, My only fear is that she may carry her piety to excess; that is, if one can ever be too religious! She is like a little mother of a family already. If God gives her children, they will indeed be happy.

'I shall go with her to Mende, but I shall only stay a few days, for I do not like to leave my husband, who is getting old and infirm, and suffers from my absence.'

CXXXII.

'January 13, 1828.

'Shall I write for many more years in this little journal? God alone knows. I leave all to Him. What grieves me is that I still cling to earth by so many close ties; yet my heart sincerely desires to be all for God, and I implore Him to have mercy on my weakness. The state of France fills me with fear. The newspapers breathe nothing but revolution, and inflame not only men's minds but their hearts. We have had a hardly-contested election here between M. de Rambuteau and M. Doria. I think God must be offended at this strife, when each says and does all he can to disparage and calumniate the other. M. de Villèle has resigned, or rather he has been dismissed, from the Government. Both parties are infuriated against religion, which is my only political anxiety! I detest this eternal warfare and the storm of newspaper invectives against their respective political opponents. How is it possible to admire this liberty of the press, which yet they tell me is a necessity

of a constitutional government? I fear that this Government, which we have so ardently desired, will carry the strife even into private families. There is far more of the spirit of the evil one than of God in these ill-conditioned papers! How vain, after all, are all our pre-conceived systems of government!

'M. de la Maisonfort, our minister at Florence, is dead at Lyons, on his way back to Tuscany. M. de Vitrolles is appointed in his place; but I hear he will not go to his post for some little time. This will detain Alphonse indefinitely in Italy. Sophie, who has been such a joy and consolation to me this winter, must return to Mende. My poor husband is always suffering from his habitual infirmity; I devote myself entirely to him, and try to make him forget the time, which I should like to do myself, till my boy returns from Italy! They talk of appointing him to some distant embassy. How shall I be able to bear it if it should be an exile of many years? After a life of such continual anxieties and cares, the close of it is sadly lonely. What would become

of me if it were not for prayer, which always calms and soothes me, like an intimate talk with an all-powerful and loving Friend. Oh! what should we do without this belief in a sensible communication between the creature and the Creator?'

CXXXIII.

'Milly, April 15, 1828.

'Here I am again at Milly, but for a few hours only. I am always more disposed here than elsewhere to jot down my thoughts in this poor neglected journal, which I fancy I shall soon give up altogether. I no longer feel the same interest in writing or in reading what I have written. The great events of my life seem so distant, and all things pass so rapidly; besides, in old age, one feels the vanity of everything so much more that one has less wish to preserve a remembrance of it all. Nothing interests me now but what touches my heart, and that I have no need to write about. Nevertheless, there are still some epochs that I should like to record from time to time, less for myself than for my children.

The last steps are those which lead to heaven, and I must not neglect them. I feel my increasing age very much. Others say that they do not perceive it, and that I have still the same face and figure as at thirty. But *the shadows lengthen behind me*, as Virgil says, whom I was reading this evening in Boisgermain's translation.'

CXXXIV.

'September 15, 1828.

'Alphonse is arrived! He came on Wednesday, the 10th of this month, with his wife, his mother-in-law, and his charming little girl, all in very good health. Thanks, a thousand thanks to God! Alphonse is, however, terribly thin, which troubles me; but I must get accustomed to that. I have been very happy, very busy, and very much moved by their return; and, at my age, such emotions, whether of pleasure or of pain, are always trying. My health also is failing; but one always feels better when one's heart is at ease, which is a rare thing in this world. And I have many things which still trouble me. . . . .

It is impossible to see a prettier or a more amiable child of her age than Julia. She is a real treasure, and I must say she is admirably brought up. Her mother is more charming every day—so simple, without the smallest affectation, fulfilling all her religious duties, and so loving and kind to every one around her. She has also made great progress in painting since she has been in Italy, and has brought home some beautiful pictures; among the rest, an admirable likeness of Julia.'

CXXXV.

'Milly, October 3, 1828.

'I have been all alone here since the 22nd of September. I came to superintend our usual vintage. Alphonse, Marianne, her mother, and Julia started on Wednesday the 17th, to take possession of their new property at Montculot. They were received like the *grands seigneurs* of old. The whole population came out to meet them, the women dressed in white, the men firing *feux de joie*, &c. They gave a beautiful fête in return in the gardens of the château, which adjoin the woods.

'From thence Alphonse went alone to Paris, where his friends had summoned him to confide in him a coming *coup d'état.* Alphonse is convinced that it will fail, and that the Bourbons, whom he loves as much as I do, will sink under the weight of public opinion if they risk a fight. He is, perhaps, right. One judges often better at a distance than nearer home. As for me I am alarmed beyond measure at the fever in which the daily articles of the morning papers plunge our wisest heads. It appears to me that everything must go to pieces in a government subject to such a chaos of different opinions.'

CXXXVI.

'November 7, 1828.

'Alphonse is come back. He has been very well received, especially by the King, Charles X. They would have sent him as Chief Secretary to Spain, if he would have accepted it; but he preferred waiting for London, which has been promised to him in a year, and from whence the step is certain to an appointment as minister plenipotentiary. He brought me

back a beautiful little chandelier for my drawing-room at Mâcon, and a great deal of ready money, of which he guessed rightly I was in extreme need, so as not to sadden my poor husband with matters of business. How happy I feel at this meeting! My children are going to spend the evening with me at Mâcon; they are now at St. Point. Alphonse has just sent me some verses of his own composition, which have touched me very much. In them he expresses just what I so often feel. He is in fact as my mouthpiece; for I, too, feel all those beautiful things, but am dumb when I want to speak of them—even to God! When I make my meditation, I sometimes have like a furnace of love in my heart, but from which issues no flame. But God, who hears me, does not need words. I thank Him for having given them to my son.'

[Here follows a hymn of thankfulness and blessing on this son.]

CXXXVII.

July 13, 1829.

'Under this date, and after this great gap in my journal, I record my journey to Paris. Thanks to Alphonse, it has been an unmixed pleasure. I have enjoyed so much seeing again this the home of my childhood, and knowing some of the innumerable friends, among whom Alphonse now reckons the men most distinguished for birth and talents in France. Madamé Récamier, whom they say is like me in face, received me with inexpressible kindness, and invited me to her house to hear M. de Châteaubriand read a tragedy of *Moïse*. His face struck me almost more than his verses. He has the majestic air of a king surrounded by his court. I own, however, that I prefer the natural modesty of several other great and clever men who were there, and of others whom I knew in my childhood. Still, glory has great charms for me. I think if my son had but a small share of it, I should be only too proud! But I ask many things of God, before that, for him!'

CXXXVIII.

'September 21, 1829.

'My dear old boy overwhelms me with tenderness, and is always helping me now in my days of distress or difficulty. He has just undertaken to pay our rent of 3,000 francs, which we owe to my sister-in-law, Madame de Villars. I love to note all these traits of his love for me, and I renew, out of the fulness of my heart, all praise and thankfulness towards Him who has given me such dutiful and good children.

'Alphonse is not here at this moment, as he has gone to look after his property at Montculot. He has refused the offer of the new minister, M. de Polignac, for fear of being associated with a Government which is justly exposed to much public reprobation. M. de Polignac insisted. My son replied that he could not, at any price, risk being an accomplice in the *coup d'état*, which was to upset the charter; that this proceeding would, in his opinion, upset the Bourbons also; that he knew that this was not the wish of M. de

Polignac, but that the mutual hostility of the ministry and the country would bring about that fatal result in spite of him. He, therefore, implored M. de Polignac to leave him out of the new ministry

'My son sent me his letter, which I cannot but own I think admirably reasoned. But I fear that it will embitter the friends of the Government against him, and perhaps close his diplomatic career. Of course it will be a great disadvantage to him, and stop his promotion for the present; but I feel he ought to act according to his principles, let it cost him what it may. Strong and honest opinions form the conscience of politicians, and perhaps this very course will be useful to him in the future.

'There is also, at this moment, a vacancy in the French Academy. A good many of the Academicians, among the rest MM. Lainé and Royer Collard, have written to advise my son to come forward as a candidate, with a certainty, this time, of not being rejected. But he refused with a pride which I could not help approving. They rejected him the last time,

he says, and he will not, on any consideration, solicit the favour again. As it is contrary to the rules to elect a candidate who does not canvas the Academicians, I fear he will not be returned. My self-love, which is ambitious for him, suffers, I own! But if it be the will of God that he should bear humiliations, I accept them for him with the *superior half of my soul*, though the *inferior part* may feel some reluctance. I must, however, write down a great treat which this, my still unconquered mother's pride, has lately had. At a public meeting of the Academy of Mâcon, three weeks ago, there was an immense concourse of people, all the municipality, and the notabilities of the town and neighbourhood; in fact, an imposing array. A great many very interesting papers were read: M. de Lacretelle, a chapter on the *History of the Restoration*; M. Quinet (a very distinguished young man), a fragment of his *Voyage in Greece*. Then Alphonse was to read some of his poems. Everyone was impatiently expecting them. When his turn came, they clapped him tremendously, and cried out that they wanted to see him. He rose very grace-

fully, and began to improvise a few words in prose to tell his countrymen and fellow-citizens how gratified he felt at these marks of their approbation and sympathy. This little exordium pleased them excessively; the cheering redoubled. Then he read a little epistle to M. de Bienassis, in which there are some very touching bits of poetry. He was constantly interrupted by unequivocal signs of approval. Marianne and I were deeply touched, and overwhelmed afterwards with congratulations, and, I must say, with pride and happiness too; really it seems to me that it was very excusable then. God grant it! He sees and knows that what I wish most is, that he should turn his great talents solely to His honour and glory.

'Now I should like to talk of my other children, of whose good qualities I am also very proud. I like to repeat to our Lord, as I walk in that little alley in the garden at Milly, under the shadow of the house which has witnessed the birth of all my loved ones, that verse of the Psalm: "Thou art my Hope even from my youth. Cast me not away in

the time of age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me." I begin to reflect seriously on the decline of my life, which has been so short in one sense, and yet so long when I look back on all that has happened.'

CXXXIX.

'Milly, October 21, 1829.

'To-day is the anniversary of the birthday of my first-born. I am alone here, and I have spent the day in reflections which may prepare me for the end which I foresee cannot be long delayed. How many hours of the like retrospection have I spent at different periods of my life in this very path; sometimes with my Rosary, sometimes with my hands clasped (when no one could see me from the house), praying or meditating! What would have become of me in all my exterior and interior troubles, if I could not have turned my thoughts to the adorable mercy of God, whose Holy Spirit suggested to me sources of never-failing hope and consolation! I am conscious that this love of recollection is a great grace from God; for it has made me steal some

hours or some minutes every day of my life for communion with Him. I feel as if He inclined His ear to me, and loved this heart to heart intercourse with His unworthy creature. To-day I felt it more keenly than ever, and came home bathed in tears, without being conscious of them while I was walking. It seemed as if all my life had been passed in review before Him who is my Creator and my Judge. Oh! may His judgment of me be tempered by mercy! I saw myself, as if it were but yesterday, as a little child playing in the gardens of St. Cloud; then, as a very young *chanoinesse*, praying and singing in the chapel of the chapter at Salles, doubting whether I would not, like some of my companions, pronounce the vows which would consecrate my whole life to the praise and service of God in that peaceful retreat, which seemed a middle place between the world and heaven. I there saw, for the first time, my husband, so young and handsome in his rich uniform, who used to come constantly to see his sister, Madame de Villars (also a *chanoinesse*), under whose guardianship I had been placed, she being

much older and more reasonable than I. I could not help seeing that he singled me out to talk to whenever he could, and that he took advantage of every opportunity to come and see his sister. On my side I took a fancy at once to his manners and appearance. I admired his noble expression, his military courtesy, his frank yet proud look, which never seemed to soften but for me. I remember the intense but hidden joy with which I heard from his sister that he had asked for my hand. Then our first interview in the presence of Madame de Villars; our walks in the neighbourhood of the convent with some of the older chanoinesses as chaperones. Then the long and weary difficulties with the family, and so many tears shed before God, during three years of doubt and uncertainty, to obtain the miracle of his parent's consent, which seemed, at first, absolutely impossible. Then our marriage, and a short time of happiness in our poor little solitude of Milly, a far more humble home then than now. My despair when, so soon after our union, he sacrificed all, even me, to go and do his hopeless duty at

Paris, defending the King's palace on the 10th of August as a simple volunteer. Then his escape, by the mercy of Providence, though covered with blood, from the gardens of the Tuileries; his flight, his return here, his discovery, his imprisonment; my agony of fear for his life; my daily visits to the grated wicket of his prison, where I used to carry our child to kiss him through the bars; my weary journeys with my child in my arms from town to town, at Dijon and at Lyons, to try and soften those rude, so-called "Representatives of the People," whose one word was life or death! Then the fall of Robespierre; our reunion after such months of anguish; our return to Milly; the successive birth of my seven children; their education, their marriages; all my anxieties about my son; then the translation from earth to heaven of those two angels, for the loss of whom the others cannot console me. . . .

. . . And now the rest, after all this weariness and struggle and care. Rest, yes; but, also, old age; for I grow older every hour, let them say what they like. These big trees

which I myself planted; this ivy which I sowed to the north of the house, that my son might not lie, even in verse, when he described Milly in his *Harmonies*; the creepers which cover the wall from the cellar to the roof; the very walls themselves, once new, now carpeted with moss; these cedars, which were just the height of my little Sophie when she was four years old, and under the sweeping branches of which I now walk without stooping;—all this tells me, often enough, how old I am! The graves of so many of our peasants (whom I had known young and strong), which I pass in my daily walk to church, do they not tell me also how soon a similar resting-place will be dug for me? and how little I can reckon on a permanent home here? Yet I cannot help crying sometimes when I think what I shall have to leave behind me: my poor husband, the faithful companion of my youth, who is now so suffering, and who wants me to help him to share his pains as formerly we shared each other's joys; my children, those dear children! Alphonse and his wife, who by her loving tenderness has become as a sixth

daughter to me,—Cecilia and her charming little ones, a third generation, who love me as I love them; and those whom I have lost, and whose shadows seem to pursue me as I walk at sunset up and down my favourite paths; my Césarine, my pride, from her glorious beauty, buried far from me behind that Alpine horizon, from whence her remembrance perpetually returns to sadden me; my Susan, that little saint, round whose head a halo of glory seemed always to float, and whom God took from me that I might have in her an image of purity for ever before my eyes—all dead or absent! Here I am alone, as I was before having borne my fruits: some are fallen to the earth, like those of the trees; others have been carried away far from the parent stem by the Great Husbandman. . . . Ah! what a crowd of thoughts attract and pursue me in this garden, and then drive me away from it, when they make my heart and eyes overflow! May I not well christen it my garden of olives, O my Saviour! Is it not the same with everyone? Alas, yes! This was my "garden of delights," as Solomon speaks in

his Canticle, and now it is bare, despoiled, and desolate—a true garden of olives, where I come as on the eve of my own death. And yet it is very dear to me, even through the very blanks which death and time have made around me—even when I glance towards the lime trees below, as if expecting still to see the white frocks of my little girls, or when I listen, almost instinctively, to hear once more the joyous voices of my children, rejoicing over a new butterfly, or a fresh flower in their own little gardens! What had I done to deserve this place, which, though it sometimes appeared to me small and arid, yet was so happy and sweet a nest for my numerous brood? May it be for ever blessed; and, after me, may it shelter those who will still be mine!

'But I hear the sound of the Angelus bell at Bussières. Away with vain thoughts! it is better to pray than to write. I will dry my tears and repeat alone the Rosary which my children used to answer, and which now will find no echo save in the twittering of the birds and the falling leaves. No; it is not

wise to dwell much on thoughts which move one so deeply. We need all our strength for the duties of the day, which will not cease till we lie on our deathbeds. It is written somewhere in Holy Scripture, that tears weaken the human heart; and I want mine to be strong as much as ever!' . . .

CXL.

(After this page there is only a little volume full of domestic details, the interest of which is lessened by circumstances to which these notes allude. The volume is closed by a few words which I here transcribe, and which seem to be a farewell to this and all future journals.)

'It is the will of God. Let us abandon ourselves entirely to His good pleasure. After all, true wisdom consists in an entire resignation of ourselves to His adorable will. I am very busy just now putting all my old journals in order, some of which I have re-read with great interest. I am, thereby, more and more filled with gratitude to God for all the favours I have received at His hands, and with sorrow

at the little progress I have made towards perfection, in spite of all the good resolutions and reflections I have so often and so fruitlessly made. But as long as God gives us life, there is time to win heaven. It is this which I beseech of Him with all the powers of my soul, imploring Him to pardon my many faults and shortcomings, and to pour down upon me, and upon all belonging to me; the abundant riches of His grace. As to temporal blessings, I only ask for them so far as they may help us on our road to heaven; but I would rather leave all such considerations to His paternal decrees, who knows what is best and safest for each one of us. May He abundantly bless my children, my friends, and all those who have loved me, and whom I have so fondly loved on this earth!'— . . .

(These are her last words, written on the last page of her last journal.)

CXLI.

This is all that remains of the written thoughts of this pure and holy soul. The rest is engraved in the hearts of her children,

in the traditions of the humble village which she inhabited for forty years, and in the recollections of that truly distinguished society of Mâcon, where her memory is cherished by as many friends as still survive her.

The remaining portions of our mother's manuscript would have little interest for her descendants, although they are unconsciously minute records of her extraordinary merits. Those of her grandchildren, who may be curious to read them, will find them carefully written in her own hand, in eighteen little copybooks, which I shall leave to them, as I have received them, with a little inventory of other precious memorials, all speaking to the heart. In them they will find herself in a thousand and one forms: as mother of a family; as mother of the poor; as a woman of exalted piety, pouring out the secrets of her inmost soul before God, and annihilating herself in His sight. Here we find the fervour or coldness with which she performed the daily exercises of religion, at church or by her bedside. There, her attendance at religious functions and her examinations of

conscience, especially on the eve of those days when she was to approach the altar of the Most High.

Further on, are domestic details, and the minutiæ of household economy: how to provide, with never-failing hospitality, for the wants of her family or her guests from the wheat in her barns, the wine in her vineyards, the milk in her dairy, the eggs in her poultry-yard. Then follow the prices of bread and butter, coffee and sugar, fruit and vegetables, &c., in such or such a month of such and such a year; and endless careful and prudent calculations as to how to reduce the frugal table in proportion to the badness of such and such a harvest or vintage; all the while deducting a large portion for the poor, and for the secret pecuniary help so frequently needed by her son. Further on are endless recipes most carefully entered and explained to meet the ordinary illnesses of the peasants round her; in fact, a complete handbook of that rural medical science which she exercised every hour of the day in the hall at Milly, which was filled from morning till night with sick

and old people, men, women, and children, whom her reputation for kindness and medical skill attracted from all the villages round, like a pilgrimage to a living saint. Here and there are details of nights passed by the sick beds of her 'dear poor' (as she called them), or of little children, with technical notes, written during her watches, of different kinds of dressings and treatments of wounds or burns, or on the various symptoms and crisis of such and such a disease, or the increase of fever in certain cases, coupled with her hopes and fears about her patients. Sometimes we find that she took even her own sheets to make into a shroud for those who were beyond her care. She reproaches herself bitterly for the natural repugnance which she sometimes felt to the dressing of wounds or at deathbed scenes, and resolves to overcome such weakness by the energy of her will and the vigour of her faith. Very often, after passing through these trials of charity, she would change her soft, grey gown for one of greater elegance, and washing her beautiful hands and wiping her eyes (wet with tears for the sorrows of others),

would reappear in society with that open-hearted expression and high-bred courtesy which befitted her rank in the world. Her very presence seemed to brighten the whole company, warm all hearts, and restore peace to troubled souls: just as the soft wind of spring blows away the dry leaves of the night to let the new buds open and blossom freely. Everyone adored her, although she never thought of trying to make herself loved. But her character shone forth in her works. When she passed by with her children to go to church, or when she had been visiting in any of the cottages, the faces of the poor people would brighten up directly, or become grave and tender when they curtesied or took off their hats, as if they had met an angel of consolation in their path.

She was really happy at that time. The early and rough portions of her life had been passed over; the long and calm horizon of evening seemed stretched peacefully at her feet; the vigorous old age of her husband had conquered infirmities which, however painful, were not mortal. One saw that Provi-

dence reserved to him yet many years of happiness in the bosom of his family. He lived, in fact, to ninety, without any decay of his mental or physical powers. His son, who had so long been his torment, became his pride and his consolation. He had passed through the stormy period of early youth, and had not arrived at that of middle age. Happy and satisfied at having been allowed to make a marriage after his own heart—settled in Italy (the country he liked best) in a diplomatic post, in the most cheerful place in Europe, content with the secondary rank but honourable position which he there held, and flattered by a poetical reputation which found an echo in his mother's heart, while it excited but little anger in the minds of the envious, this son was now on leave in Paris.

He had just been elected a member of the French Academy, and that without any canvas or intrigue. This, the greatest official honour which can befall a man of letters, though its value did not deceive the son, enchanted the heart of the old father. This father had been accustomed, in the country,

to look upon the title of a 'Member of the French Academy' as a sort of inexpressible glory both to the name and to the family on whom it was conferred; like a public attestation, in fact, of a reputation which posterity could never afterwards dispute. His mother rejoiced at last to be able to say to all her husband's family: 'You see that what you used to call my "illusions," as a mother, were not such chimeras as you fancied, and that I had a right to ask you for a little patience and indulgence for the early follies of a son who has now so redeemed the honour of his name, and ratified my tenderness.' Her son was then working hard at a preliminary address, which this election had entailed, and which would, for the first time, bring him before that literary tribunal from whence he longed to push on to that political arena, which had been the one end and aim of all his studies and all his hopes. He determined to follow in the steps of M. de Serres and M. Lainé, and to defend at one and the same time his masters and his models, the Bourbons, the idols of his father and his family, and the con-

stitution, which alone satisfied his liberal aspirations. He wished to defend the Princes and their institutions both against the retrogradists of the monarchical party, and the impatient spirit of republicanism, whose hour had not yet sounded the tocsin of the two revolutions of July, 1830, and Feburary, 1848.

EPILOGUE.

It was the end of the autumn of 1829. Both in the Government itself and among the different parties in France, there was nothing but fever, trouble, and delirium. The Prince de Polignac, then Prime Minister, had so insisted in his letters (which were most kind and friendly) on my coming to Paris, and was so determined to keep for me the place of Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, that I obeyed his summons: not to accept the office, but to explain, with proper gratitude and courtesy, the motives for my refusal. I loved the Prince, but I dreaded his policy. I wished, in speaking to him, to make a distinction between the man and the minister, both as to feeling and opinion. In my speech before the Academy I had spoken frankly but decidedly against the *coup d'état*, which destroyed the Charter, and against the opposition of the Government to free thought and the independence of elections. This political programme (which was quite unexpected from me) was

received with immense applause by one party; but was looked upon as an exposition of a retrograde or Royalist policy by the Republican and Buonapartist organs. M. Lainé and M. Royer Collard hailed me as their disciple. But on leaving the hall of the Institute, which was still fearfully crowded, the Duke de Rohan, my old friend, said in my ear: 'Wish good-by to all promotion in your diplomatic career. You have just disappointed all our hopes, and given pledges to the most factious members of the Opposition.' I did not care whether or no I got my promotion. But I saw a gulf opening under the feet of Charles X., and I wished, as far as in me lay, to avert the danger.

The Prince de Polignac, full of hope in my future, had spoken to me, the year before, of his political views, in a way and with a freedom which had touched me very much. In those confidences, as in his occasional reserve, I felt that I had to do with a thoroughly honest and loyal heart; but with one whose mind had been warped by emigration, and who was alarmed by his own conscience.

The Duke de Rohan's prophecy was not fulfilled. I ought to remember it, to the honour of the King, Charles X., and the Prince de Polignac. The Prime Minister showed no resentment at my speech; but, after having long and vainly argued with me, in private and in public, on the ill-founded reasons (as he called them) for my refusal, and the non-premeditation of the *coup d'état*, he resigned himself to my opposition, and offered me the place of Minister Plenipotentiary in Greece.

It was just at the moment when Europe, through a fleeting enthusiasm, had founded that artificial kingdom on the relics of past greatness. I shared in the general illusion of liberal and classical men about the Hellenic race, so brave in battle, but so undisciplined in government. The Prince of Coburg, widower of the Princess Charlotte (the heiress to the throne of England), had just been elected King of Greece by the united consent of the Western Powers of Europe. This Prince was then at Paris, and I had known him very well in Italy as an inconsolable mourner for the

loss of his wife. The Prince de Polignac, therefore, introduced me to him as the most agreeable minister whom the French Government could offer him. I was rejoiced at the idea of going there under such auspices, and helping, however feebly, in the restoration of a kingdom on that sacred ground of classical memories, in which I should thus share, like Lord Byron, the heroic poet of this resurrection. All of a sudden, however, the intended King took alarm at the insuperable difficulties of the task he was about to undertake, and renounced the responsibility of striving to regenerate the Greek people. He started suddenly one night from Paris, flying from a kingdom as one would fly from an abyss.

We learnt, on waking that morning, that there was no longer a head for that crown, which had been offered in vain to so many other distinguished personages. Diplomacy had to set to work again to find another. That took time; but I remained still Minister Plenipotentiary, at least in expectation, and continued to receive from the Prince de Polignac

such testimonies of kindness and intimacy as were consistent with my obstinate refusal to form part of his cabinet.

My mother, enchanted at my advancement in my political career, at the prospect of my future residence under the shadow of Athens, and, above all, at my election as a member of the French Academy, was at last at ease as to the future of the son who had been her one poignant anxiety, and who had now realised almost all the dreams of her life. I made arrangements to spend with her the few months that I thought I should still have on the soil of France. I prolonged my stay in Paris only for a few days more, to collect such little presents of dress or furniture as it was my greatest pleasure to bring home to my mother and sisters on my return from my travels. Ah! it was a poor return enough in love and gratitude for all the privations which they had borne on my account during my youth—to my mother especially, who had deprived herself of every luxury and jewel, down to the very rings off her fingers, to procure me an extra pleasure, a journey, or a treat of some

sort; or to hide one of my faults and extravagancies from the just severity and censure of my family.

The tables and even the bed of my rooms at Paris were covered with jewel-cases, ornaments, and pieces of stuff or silk for hangings, which I had collected with such delight, thinking of the exclamations of surprise and pleasure which they would call forth in my mother's simple home. I was rejoicing beforehand at her astonishment, and was quite absorbed in the thought of all the pleasure I was going to give, not to her vanity but to her heart. That evening, at dinner-time (I will not insert the date for my own sake), I drove into the courtyard of my hotel, the cab loaded with pretty little bits of furniture and paper boxes, my face bright with joy at the thought of my start on the morrow, when, as I sprung out of the cab on the first step of the stairs, I saw standing by the porter's lodge, that dearest of my friends, the Comte Aymon de Virieu, whom Providence seems to have given me, from childhood to old age, as the sharer in all the joys and sorrows of my life. After having

followed the same studies at the same school and college, the same pursuits in our respective homes, the same route in our travels, and the same society in the different capitals in which we had resided together, we were now embarked in the same diplomatic career. He was to start on the morrow for his post in Germany, and we had settled to dine together, and to pass the evening in my rooms to prolong the pleasure of a last talk together before wishing each other 'good-by' for so long a time. On shaking hands with him, however, as I got out of the carriage, I was struck at his pallor, and at the distress which was visible on his expressive face. His eyes, which generally sparkled with fun, and sometimes with a kind of gentle sarcasm, seemed for the first time to be heavy with unshed tears. Instead of responding to my joyful exclamation of welcome, he seemed to avoid looking at me, while an inexplicable fear, mingled with pity, seemed to pervade his whole countenance. No smile met mine, while, on the contrary, he looked vexed at seeing me so confident and happy. He was troubled at my gaiety, and seemed to

reproach me for it involuntarily, without explaining why I should be otherwise. His whole appearance, in fact, struck me with a presentiment of coming evil. My face fell, and the smile died away from my lips. 'Come upstairs,' he said, with a broken voice; 'I have to break sad tidings to you. Let us shut ourselves up in your room, and summon all your strength of mind to meet them bravely.' I went up the staircase stunned by the threatened blow. He dragged me into my own room, shut the door, and made me sit down on the edge of the bed, where my poor dog, jumping for joy at my return, could not understand why his caresses, ordinarily responded to so warmly, should now be met by a rude rebuff. 'Speak!' I exclaimed to Virieu, hiding my face in my two hands, and striving to brace myself up for some unknown misery, that worst of torments, which threatens all points of one's heart at once. Then, with all the tenderness and consideration possible, and the groping hesitation of one to whom has been committed the charge of delivering a message as terrible as it was unexpected, he ended by

breaking to me, as he clasped me in his arms, the awful fact, 'You have no longer a mother!' It seemed to me that the earth was sinking under my feet, and that I had no longer any existence in the past, the present, or the future. My soul flew upwards to meet hers who had been my life here below, and without whom I never seemed till now to have realised that I could live.

She was still so beautiful, and seemed so young, so full of life, activity, and energy, that the idea of a separation had never crossed my thoughts, save as a very distant prospect, softened by the gradations of age and by the shortness of time which I myself should have to pass in this world after a slowly protracted farewell. The separation had indeed come, and that without preparation and without an adieu. In the morning I felt as if I lived a double life, in her heart and mine, and in the evening only one was left in my breast, to cry and moan and live on alone for evermore. The best half of my life was gone. To make matters worse I was quite by myself at Paris. She who alone could have shared in my des-

pair and mingled her tears with my sobs, was away. Neither mother, wife, nor child! Nothing but a blank in me and around me—now and for ever more!—only a devoted friend, who strove by his tenderness to soothe the agony of my grief, and point out the only consolation. I remained sitting on my bed dressed as I was, and completely broken down, that whole evening and all that night. Every moment of that time is as vividly before me now as if it were yesterday. When I became a little calmer, I strove to gather from my friend the agonising details of her death. The circumstances attending it were as heart-breaking as the event itself was sudden and unexpected. I dragged them one by one from the reluctant lips of M. de Virieu. He did not leave me till dawn, in order to prepare everything for my departure for Mâcon. Alas! it was already too late for me to be able to hold in one last embrace the mortal remains of her who had borne me for nine months in her womb, and all her life in her heart!

These are the details which my friend at

last gave me, and to which my father and the servants added a few more circumstances when describing the agony of which they had been the witnesses. My poor mother was expecting me joyfully from day to day. The alternations of hope and disappointment, and the immense joy she had felt at my election to the Academy, and my appointment as minister in Greece, had agitated her more than usual and brought on a slight attack of fever. On the 27th of November, after having, according to her invariable custom, heard mass at dawn, she went from the church to the public baths, kept by the sisters of charity in the town, adjoining the hospital which bears their name. The Sister Superior, who received her and talked to her whilst they were preparing her bath, said that she spoke as usual of pious things and works of charity with that grace and brightness which were her peculiar characteristics in her best days. The bath being prepared, she went in without being accompanied by the bathing-woman; in accordance with a vow she had made in her youth at the 'chapter' where she was *cha-*

noinesse (and which she had preserved ever since her marriage), never to be seen undressed, or to employ a maid in personal services of that nature; always to dress and undress herself, and even to light her own fire, in continual remembrance of the humility and holy poverty which she had then embraced.

She had been only a few minutes in the bath, when the Superior, passing by the corridor into which all the doors of the bath-rooms opened, heard a cry, and then a groan, from her cell. She rushed in. The bath was overflowing with boiling water on to the floor; the swan's neck, by which the hot water flowed, was open, and streams of the boiling liquid were pouring over my mother's breast and arms, the effect of which had been that she had already fainted away. The strong arm of the Superior and of one of the bathing-women dragged her out instantly from this fiery cascade; but she was more than half dead. It was evident that, finding the bath too cold, she had turned the hot-water cock; and that the sudden rush of boiling water, which was the result, dashing on her chest,

had taken away her breath, so that she had neither the time nor the power to shut up the swan's neck again, which was rather stiff to turn. The fresh air restored her to consciousness; but she was terribly burnt. She embraced the Superior, who had scalded her arms and hands very much even during the moment of dragging her out of the bath, and thanked her warmly for her care. They laid her on one of the mattrasses of the hospital, and four of the young incurable patients, to whom for twenty years she had continually brought linen, food, and medicine, bore her tenderly back from the hospital to her own home. The rumour of this terrible event had already spread like wildfire through the town. A crowd of servants, working people, and pious women, who were coming out of church, followed her with tears to her door, offering up prayers and vows to heaven for her recovery. Public lamentations burst forth in each street through which the stretcher was carried. It seemed as if the whole town were losing its mother as well as ourselves. The doctors hastened to her bedside. At first the

accident did not seem to be so serious; but in the evening, when the dressing of her burns was examined, the gravity of the case became apparent to all. Fever ensued, followed by delirium. This delirium was, however, gentle and loving like herself. From time to time she recovered her senses sufficiently to thank those around her for their care, and to console my poor father, who remained motionless and despairing at the foot of her bed, overwhelmed by a blow which it was impossible even for his resignation to accept. She struggled against physical suffering and pain up to the last, so that her remaining hours might be given to those who loved her, and to God, whom she saw already through the light of faith. She wished to unite herself once more to Him in the Blessed Sacrament, in which she had so often anticipated the possession of the Divinity even on earth. The bystanders affirmed that her beautiful countenance, inflamed by the ardour of her convictions, and beatified by this mystical union with her Spouse, seemed to light up the whole bed, even more than the tapers which the

kneeling choir boys of the hospital held in their raised hands behind her curtains. A great calm, a long silence, a sweet sleep, which revived the hopes of the watchers, followed this solemn rite of the dying. Alas! it was a false flicker of the expiring flame. She woke again but to expire, and that with perfect calmness and clearness of mind. She who assisted at that last agony towards nightfall, and who endeavoured to supplement my absence by her own tenderness, has often repeated literally to me the words (broken by dreams) which she pronounced from time to time until dawn.

'My husband,' 'my children,' 'Alphonse, Marianne, Cécile, Eugénie, Sophie—may God bless them all!' 'Why are they not all here that I may bless them myself?' 'My Alphonse, my poor boy! Oh! how he will grieve at not having been with me at this last hour! Tell him, oh! tell him, that I do not suffer any more now—that I am already as if in a place of peace and joy, from whence I have a vision of heaven, and of all kinds of blessings for my dear children upon earth!' Then falling

again into a dreamy kind of sleep, sweet and peaceful as that of a little child, and broken only by a word now and then, and a smile which hovered round her lips and finally lit up her whole face, she exclaimed towards dawn, 'Oh! how happy I am! Oh! how happy I am!' Oh! how happy I am!' three times running; and then, 'My God! thou hast not deceived me. I am so happy!' and, with those words, her pure spirit, with a gentle sigh, ascended to her God.

This is, word for word, the history of her death. All who were with her are still alive to bear witness to its truth, save my father and our poor Philibert, who, in losing her mistress, lost also her wish to live; and who only remained on earth long enough to continue to her master those faithful services which she had rendered from affectionate admiration to my mother. How beautiful is the tie between the servant who serves for love and the family who rewards that service by gratitude, tenderness, and equality in affection! It is the perfection of the different states of life on earth, diverse in fortune but equalised by love.

It was three days after my irreparable loss that I arrived at Mâcon, hoping to see at least her dear remains before they were hidden for ever from human view. I was accompanied by an old friend, a true Samaritan, who had witnessed some of my anguish, Amèdée de Parseval, and whom a circumstance, already alluded to in this journal, had fondly attached to my mother, whose real son he had vainly wished to become. It was too late. The coffin was already buried under heaps of snow in the village cemetery. Owing to the absence of my poor father, who had been dragged away half dead from his home as soon as our mother had breathed her last sigh, and to the fact of all her children having been unavoidably far away in their respective homes when this terrible event occurred, it had been entirely forgotten that my poor mother had particularly wished to be buried in the cemetery of St. Point, in the shade of the little village church where she had so often prayed during her summer residence in that peaceful valley. I could only press my burning lips on the bed on which she had died,

and kiss every object she had last touched, down to the very floor of her room and the threshold of the door against which her coffin had brushed when she was carried (amidst the sobs of the poor) to her last resting-place. But my heart rebelled against the idea of any wish of hers being neglected, and also at the thought of being unable to go and pray by those dear remains except amongst a crowd of people who were unknown or indifferent to her. I resolved, therefore, while I had the opportunity, to repair this neglect of her secret wishes, and to exhume the coffin so as to transport it to the spot she herself had chosen. It almost seemed to me as if the eternal distance which separated her soul from mine would be lessened if her dear body rested between our own door and that of the church of St. Point, which almost adjoined the château. If I confess the whole truth, there was also in this exhumation a pretext for once more looking at the dear face which had been so ruthlessly closed from me, before time had disfigured or reduced it to the handful of ashes which would soon be all that was left of

her human remains. The coffin, which bore no distinguishing mark to tell it from others, and the very site of which had been effaced by the snow before the gravedigger's spade had barely covered it, was to be reopened to prove the identity of her dear body, so that our pious intention might not be frustrated, or any danger exist of our bearing away an unknown corpse instead of our mother. I pass over these sad details. All was accomplished in the night, as I had wished. We swept away the snow which had fallen thickly over the uneven ground, and discovered, by groping, the right coffin among many others. Philibert, who had laid her dear mistress in it herself, recognised it at once. By the glare of the tapers it was opened that I might gaze once more on that sleeping face. She was there in all her beauty, save that the eyes were closed. The dear look, which ever thrilled through me, was gone; but death had not yet marred her pure form with its corrupting touch. My lips were pressed with love and yet terror on that icy forehead, and bitter tears fell in that silent coffin. At last it had to be closed. I watched

by its side with Philibert until the midnight hour, when the peasants of Milly were to come silently, one by one, and bear away noiselessly on their shoulders that dear burden to my home. At midnight we started on foot, through deep snow, past the suburbs of the town along the road which led to our château in the hills. Although I had limited the number of the followers in this sad procession to myself (of all the members of the family) and to the farmers and labourers of her dear old home at Milly, the wives and children of these poor fellows, all wearing some token of humble mourning, considered that they had a right of affection to follow the Head of the house and lengthen the black file of weepers, whose tears were her noblest panegyric. Not a voice nor a whisper broke the silence during the long march of this solemn crowd. Nothing was heard but the wooden shoes of the women as they marched on the crisp and frozen snow, holding their little children by the hand; or, from time to time, the cavernous sound of a slight shaking of the oak coffin as it was shifted from the shoulders of one peasant to

the other, each envious of his turn in bearing the holy burden.

At about two and a half hours from the town, we left the high road and climbed up the steep hill leading to the hamlet of Milly. The path was slippery with icicles. Every household was awake and watching for our arrival; and one saw, at the threshold of the doors, old men or children, each holding a little brass lamp, which lit up pale and tearful faces and hands, shivering with cold in that bitter December night. When we arrived at the courtyard of the house, the bearers, followed by all the inhabitants of the village, mounted slowly up the five steps which led to the hall door, and deposited the coffin in the centre of the vestibule—on the very spot where every morning she was accustomed to receive the old, the sick, or the needy; and to distribute amongst them the food, clothing, soup, or medicines which they required, while she dressed, on her knees, the wounds or burns of the sufferers. Those very walnut wood benches, on which I have so often seen the legs of the peasants stretched out while she tenderly

wound round them lint or bandages, now bore the coffin of her whose loving, skilful hand was for ever still.

She was laid, as it were, among the very instruments of her charity. A long sob filled the hall into which the peasants had crowded. Every one drew near to dip a little box branch in the holy water placed near her head, and to sprinkle as many tears as holy water over those dear remains. During this halt under the roof which had sheltered her youth and early love, I retired to her own room and cried my heart out, my face buried in the coverings of her empty bed. I heard the dull tread of the sabots of the men and women, perpetually ascending and descending the steps of the front hall, to come and kneel and pray by turns round her coffin. We waited thus till the slow dawn broke of the winter's morning, before embarking in the defiles of the mountains, encumbered as they were with driving snow, which a cold north wind had blown over the paths, filling up the ravines and effacing all visible tracks. These roads would have been very dangerous for the little pro-

cession at night, and still more for those who were to bear their precious burden from Milly to the cemetery of St. Point. As soon as the dawn had reddened the distant peaks of that Alpine horizon, which at Milly was her great delight, we started again, escorted to the top of the first hills by the whole village in tears. On turning into the higher valley, we parted sorrowfully from the weeping crowd, who felt as if their only friend was being torn from them; and with a little knot of eight strong men, climbed up the steep defile which goes by the name of *Croix-des-Signaux*. Four of the men walked before the coffin to sound the path, whilst the four others carried her. I walked behind alone, following closely on their footsteps. The snow in some places was up to our knees; it deadened all sound except the sharp whistling of the blast through the crevices of the rocks. Two little half-frozen birds, not seeing any other solid ground for their feet, perched themselves on the black cloth of the coffin, which the bearers had laid down for a moment on the edge of a ravine, whilst with their knives they cut away the

snow which was clogging the soles of their shoes. I do not know why, but these poor little birds, seeking help and shelter even from her coffin, made me burst into tears! It reminded me of all the miseries and sadness of which that loving heart had been the shelter whilst it still beat on this earth. The birds twittered for a moment and then gave a little mournful cry, after which they resumed their flight in the direction of St. Point. My thoughts flew towards the souls of Césarine and Susan, who seemed to come under the symbol of these wings to meet their mother and precede her to her place of rest. The heart is naturally superstitious when riven with emotion even beyond its strength. There are moments in the life of everyone, whether man or woman, when all their powers of reasoning are dissolved in tears.

Our journey, which, in fine weather, ordinarily lasted but two hours, took seven in that ocean of snow, whose waves threatened every moment to swallow us up altogether. There were some turns in the deep ravines leading down to the valley of St. Point, where our

only guides were the blackened stems of the chesnut trees hanging over the abyss, and where we must have perished but for the skill and strength of those devoted Milly peasants. It seemed as if their very burden gave them power and confidence.

We did not arrive till towards the end of the day. We deposited the coffin in my mother's own room, and on her bed, which for the last few years I had taken for myself. I shut myself up in a little tower, which serves as a dressing-room to this apartment, and there watched alone, with the door of communication open between, during the whole of that last night which my dear mother was to pass under the roof of her old home. I do not know why, but I felt as if she were nearer to me while I thus prolonged my watch by her side. God alone can tell the prayers, the invocations, the tears, the remorse, the blessings, the revelations of that night! I fell asleep from very sorrow and exhaustion as the sun rose, and was woke by the sound of the funeral bell, which was already summoning all the inhabitants of the neighbouring moun-

tains to the mournful ceremony of her second interment. Strangely enough it was not the last; for, by a curious and unpremeditated combination of circumstances, it seemed as if the earth were to take, give up, and retake possession of the mortal remains of one whom the tenderness and veneration of those she had left behind, disputed even in her grave.

Looking out of the window on the two great pents covered with snow, which form the valley of St. Point, I saw crowds of black figures descending towards the church and the château, gathered from all the châlets and huts in the mountains. The whole country seemed to be in mourning, and the sighing of the wind brought even to the house the murmur of sobs.

Nothing had been prepared in the cemetery for the interment. Death had surprised us before we had time to think of her tomb. If our mother had been consulted (as my father was later) as to the place and mode of her sepulture, her humility and the dread she had of too much care being bestowed on her body, would have certainly induced her to leave a

memorandum in her will begging only to share the last resting-place of the poor. But she had not the time to do this. She had only expressed a vague wish to be buried at St. Point. I could not make up my mind, however, both for my own sake and that of my sisters and their children, and that innumerable family of peasants who were united to her in heart as much as we were by blood, to lose in a few years all traces of her relics under a grassy knoll nibbled by sheep in the ordinary churchyard. I felt that such relics should be embalmed in a special manner to mark her holiness and our love. I, therefore, resolved to build a little family mausoleum, where some day we might be allowed to rejoin her, should God give us the grace to die where we have lived and loved.

The site and laying out of the gardens at St. Point favoured this thought. On a rising ground, in the middle of the valley, like the pedestal of an old temple, are built both the church and the château. The church is so enclosed in the terraces of the castle that it was evidently in old feudal times only the

chapel of the manor house. Even now the gardens are only separated from the rustic cemetery which surrounds the church by a low box and filbert hedge, with here and there an old walnut tree, of which the nuts fall (to the great satisfaction of the little shepherd boys) on the graves below. The walls and tower of the old Roman church, dark with age, add their shade in summer to that of the nut trees, and give this part of the garden almost the look of a sanctuary. This was the favourite resort of our mother during the hottest hours of the day, when she came here for the months of harvest. I used to watch her with delight, from the windows of my little tower, sitting with her book in her hand, or else reciting the Rosary on a wooden seat, which had been placed under a large cherry tree, of which the branches, heavy with fruit, used to hang over her head.

Even in the midst of my despair I felt a kind of sweetness at the thought that she would rest exactly in this spot, under the same shade, and the same grass, covered with the fruit and flowers of the garden she had so

loved during life. I resolved, therefore, to build the mausoleum in this very place, where I felt it would be the most cherished of all the family possessions. But as, in these days in France, no one can answer for any one family retaining their property long, (not even a sepulchre!) and as misfortunes might necessitate the conveyance of this estate, mausoleum and all, to some creditor or indifferent person, I did not choose that my children or grandchildren should be robbed of this treasure, like an ordinary thing transferred for so much money from one hand to another. The idea of such a profanation in future filled me with horror. I thought over it a great deal, and finally decided on what I subsequently accomplished: namely, to make over to the village in perpetuity that portion of the garden on which the mausoleum would be placed, with a solemn charge to keep it from any sort of profanation. And lest that charge should become burdensome on the parish, I bound myself in return to give a piece of land on the hill adjoining the church for the building of a presbytery, which was much needed, and

to build that presbytery at my own cost. The laws of the 'Commune' could not refuse to ratify a contract which was so clearly to the advantage of the inhabitants of the valley, and, in fact, the deed was signed without any difficulties.

But, as I also wished that during my life-time, or during the life of those dear to me, this mausoleum should be reserved for our own private devotions, without being exposed to the criticisms or visits of strangers, I resolved to build a little low wall, covered with ivy, between the garden and the cemetery, which should enable us without observation, whenever we pleased, to pour out our prayers and our tears over her much-loved grave. All this passed through my mind during that long night's watch by her coffin, which the morrow was going to carry away out of my sight, and which the instinct of tenderness, shrinking from the idea of an eternal separation, made me resolve to bring back, as it were, within my reach as soon as possible, in this mausoleum. I had dimly conceived the idea at Mâcon, and had obtained from the govern-

ment permission, in the meanwhile, to place the coffin under the pavement of the church, in the vault of the old Lords of St. Point, of the illustrious house of Rochefort. What would I not have given that the miracle which was enacted a century ago in this very vault could be reproduced for us! A young Marquise de St. Point, whose prolonged fainting-fit had been mistaken for death, had been interred in an open coffin under these very stones. The night of her funeral, the bell-ringer, coming in to ring the angelus, heard a groaning under the pavement, where the tomb had been sealed down. Filled with fear, he rushed out of the church and up to the château to tell what had happened. The Marquis and his servants ran into the church. The stifled cry was again heard; the stones were torn open by the half-distracted husband, who descended into the vault, and found the supposed corpse living and breathing in his arms. Wild with joy he carried her back to the château, where, still young and beautiful, she graced her husband's home for many years before returning (this time in good earnest)

to her final resting-place. I had often in my childhood heard the bellringer and his old wife tell this story, as they had been witnesses of the miracle with several of the older people in the village. But, alas! such prodigies do not recur in every sorrow of one's life.

At eight o'clock, the coffin was borne from the bed to the church, followed by the weeping inhabitants of twelve hamlets, and carried through the garden and by that same nut-walk, where I had so often met her coming back from the altar, her face bathed with tears of compunction, recollection, piety, and holy joy. With my own hands I placed her in her last resting-place. Then I came back alone to my tower and locked myself in. Tears have their shamefacedness, like all feelings which are deep-seated in the soul of man. I stretched myself on the floor, my forehead buried in my hands, my eyes fixed on the church, my ears involuntarily listening to the sad toll of the funeral bell, that bell of which she so loved the sound, and which seemed to weep for her now as its mournful echo reverberated through the surrounding hills. My heart was full of un-

spoken thoughts. I only remember that, in consequence of all these days and nights of anguish and sleeplessness, my fevered brain seemed to be on fire with a pain which beat on my temples as with a sledge hammer, and vibrated through my whole being in unison with the funeral bell, so that my prayers were mingled with sobs, and physical suffering almost overpowered mental agony. Strange contradiction of our nature! at the same time material and spiritual, when our senses are bewildered, and the ear takes in outward sounds, whilst the soul is riven with untold anguish!

Towards morning I fell into an uneasy slumber, after which I rose and retraced, with my guides, the snowy paths of the mountain, where we very narrowly escaped being buried in a fresh drift. The winter sun shone brilliantly, as if to mock both the season and my sorrow. I was anxious, however, to return as quickly as possible to my poor father, who needed every possible consolation. Our winter was as sad a one as this day; and all the

remainder of his long life was henceforth as winter.

Thus we lost our mother, and the people one who had been their Providence, their example, and their guide in all grace and holiness. Ask any old man or widow whom you may meet by the wayside,—they will tell you the same tale! And for us, let us for ever cherish her dear memory. It is for this reason that I have transcribed her manuscript. One by one we shall ourselves disappear from this mortal scene, carrying away with each one of us a portion of this tenderness and of these regrets. These pages will preserve for a little time longer, perhaps, the remembrance of her goodness, and the trace of her hand; then they will become ashes like all the rest. This is the end of all books and of all generations!

APPENDIX.

PENSÉE DES MORTS.

Voilà les feuilles sans sève
Qui tombent sur le gazon;
Voilà le vent qui s'élève
Et gémit dans le vallon;
Voilà l'errante hirondelle
Qui rase du bout de l'aile
L'eau dormante des marais;
Voilà l'enfant des chaumières
Qui glane sur les bruyères
Le bois tombé des forêts.

L'onde n'a plus le murmure
Dont elle enchantait les bois;
Sous des rameaux sans verdure
Les oiseaux n'ont plus de voix;
Le soir est près de l'aurore;
L'astre à peine vient d'éclore
Qu'il va terminer son tour;
Il jette par intervalle
Une lueur, clarté pâle
Qu'on appelle encore un jour.

Translator's Note.—It was found impossible to render the full beauty of these Three Poems into English verse: so that they are reproduced in the original.

La brebis sur les collines
Ne trouve plus le gazon,
Son agneau laisse aux épines
Les débris de sa toison;
La flûte aux accords champêtres
Ne réjouit plus les hêtres
Des airs de joie ou d'amours;
Toute herbe aux champs est glanée:
Ainsi finit une année,
Ainsi finissent nos jours!

C'est la saison où tout tombe
Aux coups redoublés des vents;
Un vent qui vient de la tombe
Moissonne aussi les vivants:
Ils tombent alors par mille,
Comme la plume inutile
Que l'aigle abandonne aux airs,
Lorsque des plumes nouvelles
Viennent réchauffer ses ailes
A l'approche des hivers.

C'est alors que ma paupière
Vous vit pâlir et mourir,
Tendres fruits qu'à la lumière
Dieu n'a pas laissés mûrir!
Quoique jeune sur la terre,
Je suis déjà solitaire
Parmi ceux de ma saison;
Et quand je dis en moi-même:
'Où sont ceux que ton cœur aime?'
Je regarde le gazon.

L'enfant dont la mort cruelle
Vient de vider le berceau,
Qui tomba de la mamelle
Au lit glacé du tombeau ;
Tous ceux enfin dont la vie,
Un jour ou l'autre ravie,
Emporte une part de nous,
Murmurent sous la poussière :
'Vous qui voyez la lumière,
De nous vous souvenez-vous ?'

Où vivent-ils ? Quel astre à leur paupière
Répand un jour plus durable et plus doux ?
Vont-ils peupler ces îles de lumière,
Ou planent-ils entre le ciel et nous ?
Sont-ils noyés dans l'éternelle flamme ?
Ont-ils perdu ces doux noms d'ici-bas,
Ces noms de sœur, et d'amante, et de femme ?
A ces appels ne répondront-ils pas ?

Non, non, mon Dieu ! Si la céleste gloire
Leur eût ravi tout souvenir humain,
Tu nous aurais enlevé leur mémoire :
Nos pleurs sur eux couleraient-ils en vain ?

Ah ! dans ton sein que leur âme se noie !
Mais garde-nous nos places dans leur cœur.
Eux qui jadis ont goûté notre joie,
Pouvons-nous être heureux sans leur bonheur ?

Étends sur eux la main de ta clémence !
Ils ont péché, mais le ciel est un don !
Ils ont souffert ; c'est une autre innocence !
Ils ont aimé ; c'est le sceau du pardon !

Ils furent ce que nous sommes,
Poussière, jouet du vent;
Fragiles comme des hommes,
Faibles comme le néant!
Si leurs pieds souvent glissèrent,
Si leurs lèvres transgressèrent
Quelque lettre de ta loi,
O Père, ô juge suprême,
Ah! ne les vois pas eux-même;
Ne regarde en eux que toi!

Si tu scrutes la poussière,
Elle s'enfuit à ta voix;
Si tu touches la lumière,
Elle ternira tes doigts;
Si ton œil divin les sonde,
Les colonnes de ce monde
Et des cieux chancelleront;
Si tu dis à l'innocence:
'Monte et plaide en ma présence!'
Tes vertus se voileront.

Mais toi, Seigneur, tu possèdes
Ta propre immortalité;
Tout le bonheur que tu cèdes
Accroît ta félicité.
Tu dis au soleil d'éclore,
Et le jour ruisselle encore!
Tu dis au temps d'enfanter,
Et l'éternité docile,
Jetant les siècles par mille,
Les épand sans les compter!

Les mondes que tu répares
Devant toi vont rajeunir,
Et jamais tu ne sépares
Le passé de l'avenir.
Tu vis! et tu vis! Les âges,
Inégaux pour tes ouvrages,
Sont tous égaux sous ta main;
Et jamais ta voix ne nomme,
Hélas! ces trois mots de l'homme:
Hier, aujourd'hui, demain!

O Père de la nature,
Source, abîme de tout bien,
Rien à toi ne se mesure:
Ah! ne te mesure à rien!
Mets, ô divine clémence,
Mets ton poids dans la balance,
Si tu pèses le néant!
Triomphe, ô vertu suprême,
En te contemplant toi-même!
Triomphe en nous pardonnant!

LA CLOCHE DU VILLAGE.

Oh! quand cette humble cloche à la lente volée
Épand comme un soupir sa voix sur la vallée,
Voix qu'arrête si près le bois ou le ravin;
Quand la main d'un enfant qui balance cette urne
En verse à sons pieux dans la brise nocturne
Ce que la terre a de divin;

Quand du clocher vibrant l'hirondelle habitante
S'envole au vent d'airain qui fait trembler sa tente,
Et de l'étang ridé vient effleurer les bords;
Ou qu'à la fin du fil qui chargeait sa quenouille,
La veuve du village à ce bruit s'agenouille,
Pour donner leur aumône aux morts;

Ce qu'éveille en mon sein le chant du toit sonore,
Ce n'est pas la gaîté du jour qui vient d'éclore,
Ce n'est pas le regret du jour qui va finir,
Ce n'est pas le tableau de mes fraîches années
Croissant sur ces coteaux, parmi ces fleurs fanées
Qu'effeuille encor mon souvenir;

Ce n'est pas mes sommeils d'enfant sous ces platanes,
Ni ces premiers élans du jeu de mes organes,
Ni mes pas égarés sur ces rudes sommets,
Ni ces grands cris de joie en aspirant vos vagues,
O brises du matin pleines de saveurs vagues,
Et qu'on croit n'épuiser jamais!

Ce n'est pas le coursier atteint dans la prairie,
Pliant son cou soyeux sous ma main aguerrie,
Et mêlant sa crinière à mes beaux cheveux blonds,
Quand, le sol sous ses pieds sonnant comme une enclume,
Sa croupe m'emportait, et que sa blanche écume
Argentait l'herbe des vallons!

Ce n'est pas même, amour, ton premier crépuscule,
Au mois où du printemps la sève qui circule
Fait fleurir la pensée et verdir le buisson,
Quand l'ombre ou seulement les jeunes voix lointaines
Des vierges rapportant leurs cruches des fontaines
Laissaient sur ma tempe un frisson.

Ce n'est pas vous non plus, vous que pourtant je pleure,
Premier bouillonnement de l'onde intérieure,
Voix du cœur qui chantait en s'éveillant en moi,
Mélodieux murmure embaumé d'ambroisie
Qui fait rendre à sa source un vent de poésie !...
O gloire, c'est encor moins toi !

De mes jours sans regret que l'hiver vous remporte
Avec le chaume vide, avec la feuille morte,
Avec la renommée, écho vide et moqueur !
Ces herbes du sentier sont des plantes divines
Qui parfument les pieds ; oui, mais dont les racines
Ne s'enfoncent pas dans le cœur !

Guirlandes du festin que pour un soir on cueille,
Que la haine empoisonne ou que l'envie effeuille,
Dont vingt fois sous les mains la couronne se rompt,
Qui donnent à la vie un moment de vertige,
Mais dont la fleur d'emprunt ne tient pas à sa tige,
Et qui sèche en tombant du front.

C'est le jour où ta voix dans la vallée en larmes
Sonnait le désespoir après le glas d'alarmes,
Où deux cercueils passant sous les coteaux en deuil,
Et bercés sur des cœurs par des sanglots de femmes,
Dans un double sépulcre enfermèrent trois âmes,
Et m'oublièrent sur le seuil !

De l'aurore à la nuit, de la nuit à l'aurore,
O cloche, tu pleuras comme je pleure encore,
Imitant de nos cœurs le sanglot étouffant ;
L'air, le ciel résonnaient de ta complainte amère,
Comme si chaque étoile avait perdu sa mère,
Et chaque brise son enfant !

Depuis ce jour suprême, où ta sainte harmonie
Dans ma mémoire en deuil à ma peine est unie,
Où ton timbre et mon cœur n'eurent qu'un même son,
Oui, ton bronze sonore et trempé dans la flamme
Me semble, quand il pleure, un morceau de mon âme
Qu'un ange frappe à l'unisson !

Je me dis : Cet écho de ce bronze qui vibre,
Avant de m'arriver au cœur de fibre en fibre,
A frémi sur la dalle où tout mon passé dort ;
Du timbre du vieux dôme il garde quelque chose :
La pierre du sépulcre où mon amour repose
Sonne aussi dans ce doux accord !

Ne t'étonne donc pas, enfant, si ma pensée,
Au branle de l'airain secrètement bercée,
Aime sa voix mystique et fidèle au trépas ;
Si, dès le premier son qui gémit sous sa voûte,
Sur un pied suspendu je m'arrête, et j'écoute
Ce que la mort me dit tout bas.

Et toi, saint porte-voix des tristesses humaines
Que la terre inventa pour mieux crier ses peines,
Chante ! des cœurs brisés le timbre est encor beau !
Que ton gémissement donne une âme à la pierre,
Des larmes aux yeux secs, un signe à la prière,
Une mélodie au tombeau !

Moi, quand des laboureurs porteront dans ma bière
Le peu qui doit rester ici de ma poussière ;
Après tant de soupirs que mon sein lance ailleurs,
Quand des pleureurs gagés, froide et banale escorte,
Déposeront mon corps endormi sous la porte
Qui mène à des soleils meilleurs,

Si quelque main pieuse en mon honneur te sonne,
Des sanglots de l'airain, oh ! n'attriste personne ;
Ne va pas mendier des pleurs à l'horizon !
Mais prends ta voix de fête, et sonne sur ma tombe
Avec le bruit joyeux d'une chaîne qui tombe
Au seuil libre d'une prison !

LA SOURCE DANS LES BOIS.

Source limpide et murmurante
Qui, de la fente du rocher,
Jaillis en nappe transparente
Sur l'herbe que tu vas coucher ;

Le marbre arrondi de Carrare,
Où tu bouillonnais autrefois,
Laisse fuir ton flot qui s'égare
Sur l'humide tapis des bois.

Ton dauphin verdi par le lierre
Ne lance plus de ses naseaux,
En jets ondoyants de lumière,
L'orgueilleuse écume des eaux.

Tu n'as plus pour temple et pour ombre
Que ces hêtres majestueux
Qui penchent leur tronc vaste et sombre
Sur tes flots dépouillés comme eux.

La feuille que jaunit l'automne
S'en détache et ride ton sein,
Et la mousse verte couronne
Les bords usés de ton bassin.

Mais tu n'es pas lasse d'éclore ;
Semblable à ces cœurs généreux
Qui, méconnus, s'ouvrent encore
Pour se répandre aux malheureux.

Penché sur ta coupe brisée,
Je vois tes flots ensevelis
Filtrer comme une humble rosée
Sous les cailloux que tu polis.

Les images de ma jeunesse
S'élèvent avec cette voix ;
Elles m'inondent de tristesse,
Et je me souviens d'autrefois.

Dans combien de soucis et d'âges,
O toi que j'entends murmurer,
N'ai-je pas cherché tes rivages
Ou pour jouir ou pour pleurer ?

A combien de scènes passées
Ton bruit rêveur s'est-il mêlé ?
Quelle de mes tristes pensées
Avec tes flots n'a pas coulé ?

Oui, c'est moi que tu vis naguères,
Mes blonds cheveux livrés au vent,
Irriter tes vagues légères,
Faites pour la main d'un enfant.

C'est moi qui, couché sous les voûtes
Que ces arbres courbent sur toi,
Voyais, plus nombreux que tes gouttes,
Mes songes flotter devant moi.

L'horizon trompeur de cet âge
Brillait, comme on voit, le matin,
L'aurore dorer le nuage
Qui doit l'obscurcir en chemin.

Plus tard, battu par la tempête,
Déplorant l'absence ou la mort,
Que de fois j'appuyai ma tête
Sur le rocher d'où ton flot sort !

Dans mes mains cachant mon visage,
Je te regardais sans te voir,
Et, comme des gouttes d'orage,
Mes larmes troublaient ton miroir.

Mon cœur, pour exhaler sa peine,
Ne s'en fiait qu'à tes échos;
Car tes sanglots, chère fontaine,
Semblaient répondre à mes sanglots.

Et maintenant je viens encore,
Mené par l'instinct d'autrefois,
Écouter ta chute sonore
Bruire à l'ombre des grands bois.

Mais les fugitives pensées
Ne suivent plus tes flots errants.
Comme ces feuilles dispersées
Que ton onde emporte aux torrents,

D'un monde qui les importune
Elles reviennent à ta voix,
Aux rayons muets de la lune,
Se recueillir au fond des bois.

Oubliant le fleuve où t'entraîne
Ta course que rien ne suspend,
Je remonte, de veine en veine,
Jusqu'à la main qui te répand.

Je te vois, fille des nuages,
Flottant en vagues de vapeurs,
Ruisseler avec les orages,
Ou distiller au sein des fleurs.

Le roc altéré te dévore
Dans l'abîme où grondent tes eaux,
Où le gazon, par chaque pore,
Boit goutte à goutte tes cristaux.

Tu filtres, perle virginale,
Dans des creusets mystérieux,
Jusqu'à ce que ton onde égale
L'azur étincelant des cieux.

Tu parais! le désert s'anime;
Une haleine sort de tes eaux;
Le vieux chêne élargit sa cime,
Pour t'ombrager de ses rameaux.

Le jour flotte de feuille en feuille,
L'oiseau chante sur ton chemin;
Et l'homme à genoux te recueille
Dans l'or ou le creux de sa main.

Et la feuille aux feuilles s'entasse,
Et, fidèle au doigt qui t'a dit,
'Coule ici pour l'oiseau qui passe!'
Ton flot murmurant l'avertit.

Et moi, tu m'attends pour me dire:
'Vois ici la main de ton Dieu!
Ce prodige que l'ange admire
De sa sagesse n'est qu'un jeu.'

Ton recueillement, ton murmure,
Semblent lui préparer mon cœur:
L'amour sacré de la nature
Est le premier hymne à l'auteur.

A chaque plainte de ton onde,
Je sens retentir avec toi
Je ne sais quelle voix profonde
Qui l'annonce et le chante en moi.

Mon cœur grossi par mes pensées,
Comme tes flots dans ton bassin,
Sent, sur mes lèvres oppressées,
L'amour déborder de mon sein.

La prière brûlant d'éclore
S'échappe en rapides accents,
Et je lui dis: 'Toi que j'adore,
Reçois ces larmes pour encens!'

Ainsi me revoit ton rivage
Aujourd'hui, différent d'hier;
Le cygne change de plumage,
La feuille tombe avec l'hiver.

Bientôt tu me verras peut-être,
Penchant sur toi mes cheveux blancs,
Cueillir un rameau de ton hêtre,
Pour appuyer mes pas tremblants.

Assis sur un banc de ta mousse,
Sentant mes jours près de tarir,
Instruit par ta pente si douce,
Tes flots m'apprendront à mourir!

En les voyant fuir goutte à goutte
Et disparaître flot à flot,
'Voilà, me dirai-je, la route
Où mes jours les suivront bientôt.'

Combien m'en reste-t-il encore?
Qu'importe? Je vais où tu cours;
Le soir pour nous touche à l'aurore.
Coulez, ô flots, coulez toujours!

THE END.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018